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United Nations reform: measures and proposals

Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/68/L.37

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the statement of programme budget implications, submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, relating to draft resolution A/68/L.37 (A/68/779). During its consideration of the statement, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 18 March 2014.

Draft resolution A/68/L.37

2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 15 and 16 of draft resolution A/68/L.37, the General Assembly would decide to establish a limit of 10,700 words for each document produced by the human rights treaty bodies, as well as limits for all State party documentation submitted to the treaty body system, including State party reports, of 31,800 words for initial reports, 21,200 words for subsequent periodic reports and 42,400 words for common core documents.

3. In operative paragraph 17 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to support States parties in building the capacity to implement their treaty obligations. In operative paragraphs 22 and 23, the Assembly would decide, in principle, to webcast, as soon as feasible, the public meetings of the treaty bodies, and would request the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), with the assistance of United Nations

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country teams, to provide, at the request of a State party, the opportunity for members of its official delegation not present at the meeting to participate in the consideration of that State party's report by means of videoconference.

4. In operative paragraphs 24 and 25 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide to issue summary records in one of the working languages of the United Nations and not to translate the pending backlog of summary records, taking into account that those measures would not constitute a precedent. The Assembly would further decide that a summary record of a meeting of a State party with a treaty body, at the request of any State party, should be translated into the official language of the United Nations used by that State party.

5. Operative paragraph 26 of the draft resolution sets out the method by which the allocation of meeting time would be identified. Under operative paragraph 27, the General Assembly would decide that the amount of meeting time allocated would be reviewed biennially on the basis of actual reporting during the previous four years and would be amended on that basis at the request of the Secretary-General in line with established budgetary procedures, and would also decide that the number of weeks allocated to a committee on a permanent basis prior to the adoption of the draft resolution would not be reduced. By operative paragraph 28, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General accordingly to take into account the meeting time needed in relation to the increased capacity of States parties to submit reports under the respective human rights instruments and the situation in terms of ratifications and the number of individual communications considered, based on operative paragraphs 26 and 27, in his future biennial programme budget for the human rights treaty body system, including the specific requirements for field visits by treaty bodies mandated to conduct such visits.

6. In operative paragraph 29, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to ensure the progressive implementation of relevant accessibility standards with regard to the treaty body system, as appropriate, particularly in connection with the strategic heritage plan being developed for the United Nations Office at Geneva, and to provide reasonable accommodation for treaty body experts with disabilities to ensure their full and effective participation.

7. In operative paragraph 30 of the draft resolution, the General Assembly would decide to allocate a maximum of three official working languages for the work of the human rights treaty bodies, with the inclusion, on an exceptional basis, of a fourth official language, when necessary, to facilitate communication among the members, as determined by the committee concerned, taking into account that those measures would not constitute a precedent, given the special nature of the treaty bodies, and without prejudice to the right of each State party to interact with the treaty bodies in any of the six official languages of the United Nations.

Overall programme budget implications

8. According to paragraph 40 of the Secretary-General's statement, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/68/L.37, it is estimated that an additional appropriation of $194,300 would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, comprising an increase of $9,855,200 under section 24, Human rights; an increase of $327,400 under section 28, Public information; and an increase of $317,100 under section 29F, Administration, Geneva, partially offset by a net decrease under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council

affairs and conference management ($10,305,400); as well as an additional amount of $751,200 under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015. Total estimated resource requirements would amount to $1,293,700 for the biennium 2016-2017.

9. In paragraphs 16 to 18 of his statement, the Secretary-General also indicates that implementation of the measures in the draft resolution would entail the addition of meeting time for the human rights treaty bodies, with a total requirement of 12 additional weeks, and an additional margin of 15 per cent of the total number of weeks required to review the annual average number of reports received in the period 2015-2017 on the basis of anticipated requirements, as well as related travel expenses of the members of the treaty bodies and additional staffing in respect of the additional meetings.

10. In paragraph 19 of his statement, the Secretary-General states that additional resources would also be required for the additional meetings to provide conference services, for the editing, translation and processing of the documentation submitted by States parties to the international conventions and produced by the treaty bodies, as well as the specific reports requested, and for the provision of interpretation, drafting of summary records and other meeting services.

11. Upon enquiry as to the budgetary assumptions applied in respect of the translation of summary records in operative paragraph 25 of the draft resolution, the Advisory Committee was informed by the Secretariat that it was considered unlikely that more than one State party would request translation of the summary record of another country's meeting. The assumption was therefore made that this measure would lead to requests for translation of the equivalent of no more than half of all summary records. With respect to the allocation of working languages, as set out in operative paragraph 30 of the draft resolution, the Committee was informed by the Secretariat that internal documentation would require translation into two other working languages, and documents received would be translated into all three working languages. The Secretariat assumed that no more than half of the documentation would require translation into all three languages, and, accordingly, a calculation of 2.5 languages of translation would be applied. The inclusion of a fourth language was assumed to be unlikely to occur more than half of the time the committees meet, which would increase the calculation by another half of one language. The Committee was also informed that, as these assumptions are untested, the Secretariat will keep track of all such requests to determine how the actual workload corresponds to the assumptions, and will include that information in the biennial review. **The Advisory Committee recommends that actual workload be kept under review and be reflected in the performance report**. The Committee comments further in this regard in paragraph 16 below.

Proposed staffing

12. In paragraph 20 and table 3 of his statement, the Secretary-General indicates that additional resources would be required for the additional staffing of two P-3 press officers for the United Nations Information Service at Geneva (UNIS), to provide appropriate coverage of the treaty body sessions, and for the United Nations Office at Geneva in respect of videoconferencing of treaty body sessions. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that UNIS is currently staffed with

two editors (P-4) and two press officers (one P-3 and one P-2), and utilizes general temporary assistance funds to contract temporary press officers. The Committee was also informed that the current general temporary assistance allotment only provides for 24 work months for temporary press officers per year, most of which is used to supplement UNIS press officers for coverage of the Human Rights Council sessions, and UNIS is no longer able to provide coverage for most committees of the treaty body system. **The Advisory Committee requested but was not provided with information on workload statistics relating to UNIS to justify the request for two P-3 press officers. Taking this into account, as well as the existing capacity in UNIS and the general temporary assistance allotment available for press coverage, the Advisory Committee recommends the approval of only one P-3 press officer post.**

13. In paragraphs 21 and 22 and annex II to his statement, the Secretary-General indicates that the staffing proposal includes one P-3 post and one P-2 post for the Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, to assist in the preparation and conduct of field visits. In order to implement the capacity-building aspects of the draft resolution, it is stated that the following staffing resources would be required: (a) 10 P-3 posts as human rights officers assigned as required to 10 of the 12 current OHCHR regional presences; (b) one P-4 post as coordinator of capacity-building activities, one P-3 post and one General Service (Other level) post for training; (c) one P-3 post for the development and maintenance of a roster of trainers and the establishment of a community of learning; (d) one P-3 post and an institutional consultant to provide direct assistance to States parties upon request, and travel costs for six national workshops per year; and (e) one P-3 post for the compilation and dissemination of good practices and development of tools and training materials.

14. Upon enquiry as to the four P-3 posts referred to in paragraph 13 above, the Advisory Committee was informed that one P-3 officer would be responsible for strengthening the capacity of regional actors on treaty body reporting, including through training-of-trainers workshops. A second P-3 officer would be responsible for developing the roster of experts to create a pool of trainers who could be deployed on technical assistance missions. A third P-3 officer would be responsible for in-country assistance for States soliciting support for the development of an institutional national reporting and coordination mechanism, as well as States with acute capacity concerns and reporting shortfalls. A fourth P-3 officer would be responsible for the continuous development of tools, manuals and training materials, based on factual evidence, solid research and good practices. The Committee was also informed that an existing P-5 chief of section provides overall supervision. **Considering the existing capacity in the section and the overall request for capacity-building, which includes a P-4 post, four P-3 posts, one General Service (Other level) post and one consultant, the Advisory Committee recommends against one of the proposed P-3 posts, as the functions could be absorbed within the other proposed posts.**

Videoconferencing equipment

15. In paragraph 23 and table 4 of his statement, the Secretary-General indicates that the facilitation of the participation of States parties in the work of the treaty bodies through the provision of videoconferencing facilities would require resources for the provision of necessary equipment in the Palais des Nations meeting rooms,

staffing resources (one General Service (Other level) post) for a technician and related telecommunications costs. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the requested $120,000 for videoconferencing equipment would provide for equipment installation in four conference rooms at a cost of $30,000 each, as up to four treaty bodies meet simultaneously throughout the year. The Committee was also informed that the allocation of meeting rooms is based on availability and that the proposal takes into account the existing capacity at the Palais des Nations (and Palais Wilson) to provide a greater assurance of availability. **The Advisory Committee notes that the conference rooms at the United Nations Office at Geneva are allocated upon request and thus the requested videoconferencing equipment for four meeting rooms would not be dedicated for the sole use of the treaty bodies but could be used by other entities. Nonetheless, the Committee notes the likely increase in the use of videoconferencing facilities by the treaty body system as a result of the draft resolution, and therefore recommends approval of resources for videoconferencing equipment for two rather than four conference rooms. As a result of this recommendation, the need for technical support would correspondingly decrease, and the Committee therefore further recommends against the proposed post of videoconference technician (General Service (Other level)).**

Projected savings

16. In paragraph 24 of his statement, the Secretary-General states that the introduction of word limits and limitations to the working languages would result in extensive savings, which would serve to offset almost all of the additional costs associated with the implementation of the draft resolution in the present biennium; in the longer term, the requirements to support the system would be reviewed as part of the biennial review of the system, including the practical implications of the measures allowing for exceptions to the word and language limitations on the services provided to the treaty bodies. Upon enquiry as to the feasibility of the projected savings, the Advisory Committee was informed that the projected cost savings assumed the full realization of all possible economies. It was stated that the projected reduction in workload and resources would not affect staff and that the workload reductions would be managed by lowering the demand for freelance and contractual services. **While the Advisory Committee commends the efforts made to identify savings, it notes that these are based on untested assumptions (see paragraph 11 above), and in this regard recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to reflect any variations in resource requirements and workload statistics in the performance reports.**

17. **The Advisory Committee recalls General Assembly resolution 65/311 on multilingualism, in which the Assembly emphasized the paramount importance of the equality of the six official languages of the United Nations, and notes that the draft resolution specifies that the measures relating to translation would not constitute a precedent. The Committee also recalls in this regard that, in paragraph 20 of its report on the second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2012-2013 (A/68/656), concerning the discontinuation of translations of written replies to the lists of issues arising from the human rights treaty bodies, the Advisory Committee recommended that, in the absence of a specific instruction from the relevant intergovernmental bodies in this**

connection, the Assembly instruct the Secretary-General to reinstate the practice of translating written replies to the lists of issues arising from the human rights treaty bodies, with immediate effect.

Other issues

18. **With respect to the modalities set out in paragraph 5 above, the Advisory Committee considers that the allocation of meeting time is a matter to be decided by the General Assembly. With respect to the submission and consideration of related resource requests, the Committee expects that the established budgetary process will be respected. In particular, the draft resolution should not be read or interpreted in any way as restricting the decision-making authority of the General Assembly in administrative and budgetary matters or restricting the prerogative of the Secretary-General to propose resource requests as he deems necessary. The Committee notes in this regard that, in operative paragraph 27 of the draft resolution, the Assembly would decide that the amount of meeting time allocated would be amended in line with established budgetary procedures.**

Conclusion

19. **In line with its comments and recommendations in paragraphs 12, 14 and 15 above, the Advisory Committee recommends that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/68/L.37:**

(a) **A revised appropriation of ($324,200) would arise under the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, comprising an increase of $9,691,500 under section 24, Human rights; an increase of $163,700 under section 28, Public information; and an increase of $126,000 under section 29F, Administration, Geneva, partially offset by a net decrease under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management ($10,305,400); as well as an additional amount of $684,400 under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by a corresponding amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment;**

(b) **The amount of ($324,200) would represent a credit to the contingency fund for the biennium 2014-2015;**

(c) **Estimated additional requirements of $370,800, relating to $19,243,600 under section 24, Human rights; $330,800 under section 28, Public information; and $132,000 under section 29F, Administration, Geneva, partially offset by a decrease of $19,335,600 under section 2, General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management, would be addressed in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.**

20. **The Advisory Committee intends to review the related resource requirements in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2016-2017.**

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Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

Revised estimates relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 under section 22, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, and section 33, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Secretary-General on mitigation measures to strengthen the safety and security of United Nations staff at the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in Beirut (A/68/748). During its consideration of the report, the Advisory Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification, concluding with written responses received on 18 March 2014.

2. Under the authority vested in him by the General Assembly in resolution 66/249, paragraph 1 (c), relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for security measures, in 2013 the Secretary-General initiated a comprehensive blast assessment of the United Nations House in Beirut, which was undertaken by a specialist firm. The results of that assessment, released on 17 January 2014, form the basis for the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report (see paras. 10-11 below).

II. Background

3. The Advisory Committee recalls that the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1994/43, decided that the permanent headquarters of ESCWA should be relocated to Beirut from Amman. On 27 August 1997, the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon concluded an agreement concerning the headquarters of ESCWA, by which the Government of Lebanon granted premises in Beirut to the

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United Nations on a permanent basis to serve as the headquarters of ESCWA, United Nations funds and programmes and specialized agencies.

4. In paragraph 1 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that ESCWA has been relocated five times during its 40-year history, starting with the relocation in 1976 from Beirut to Amman, following the outbreak of civil war in Lebanon. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with information on the cost implications of the relocations showing, for example, that the cost of the relocation from Amman to Beirut in 1997, which amounted to $14.9 million at the time, would be equal to approximately $45 million at today's prices.

5. In paragraph 5 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, since 2005, the security situation in Lebanon and the region has progressively deteriorated. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a list of security mitigation measures taken since 2003 to improve the physical security of the building. The measures included: the installation of shatter-resistant film on all the external and internal glass panels of the building; the placement of T-wall and Jersey-type concrete barriers around the building; the installation of heavy-duty metal gates at all the entry and exit points of the building; the installation of anti-ramming, heavy-duty security bars on the ground floor; the implementation of perimeter access control technology, including a closed-circuit television system; the closure of public roads to the west, east and south of the building from 7.30 a.m. to 5 p.m. during working days; the deployment of hostile surveillance and reconnaissance detection capacity; and the establishment of a K-9 unit.

6. The Advisory Committee was also informed that the expenditure in relation to the security mitigation measures during the period from 2004 to 2013 amounted to over $4 million. Upon further enquiry, the Committee was informed that, while every effort had been made by the Government to close all the streets around the ESCWA building, some streets could not be closed permanently because of the geographical location of the building. The Committee was also informed that feasible security measures had been put in place by the host Government, culminating in the closure of three out of four adjacent streets during working hours.

7. Notwithstanding the extensive security measures that have been taken to improve the physical security of the building, the Secretary-General indicates that both the United Nations and the Government of Lebanon consider that there is a need to move ESCWA headquarters to another location in the vicinity of Beirut, away from its present location in the city centre, which is adjacent to busy public roads. In that regard, the Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that alternative premises within Beirut with sufficient office space to accommodate ESCWA staff while meeting United Nations security standards had so far not been identified. The Committee was also informed that two temporary relocation sites had been considered but were found to be unsuitable by both the Government of Lebanon and ESCWA. In paragraph 6 of his report, the Secretary-General indicates that, in May 2009, the Government allocated land north of Beirut that met United Nations security requirements for the purpose of constructing new premises. He also indicates, however, that, owing to several factors, the Government has still not been able to make available the resources necessary to construct a new building to house ESCWA and other organizations.

8. With regard to progress in consultations with the Government on this matter, the Advisory Committee was informed that it would take up to six months to reach

an agreement on the construction and no less than three years to build new premises. This means that, in the interim, further measures are required to reduce the existing security risk to which United Nations staff are exposed. As for the possibility of the United Nations paying for the construction of the new premises, the Committee was informed that the Secretary-General had neither considered the option nor submitted such a proposal to the Member States. The Committee was also informed that the estimated cost of constructing such a building would be at least $160 million.

9. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly encourage the Secretary-General to intensify his engagement with the host country in order to find a lasting solution to the issue of a new permanent location for ESCWA headquarters.**

III. Blast assessment and findings

10. In paragraphs 11 to 16 of his report, the Secretary-General sets out the security concerns highlighted by the Department of Safety and Security during its security assessment, in particular the vulnerability of the ESCWA compound, owing to its architectural design and geographical location, to an improvised explosive device or a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. The Secretary-General indicates that, after the security assessment, a blast assessment was undertaken by a professional blast engineering company under the supervision of the Office of Central Support Services. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the blast engineering company had been selected in accordance with United Nations Financial Regulations and Rules, specifically rule 105.16 (a) (vii), which relates to exceptions to the use of formal methods of solicitation in case of an exigency.

11. The Secretary-General indicates that the findings of the blast assessment, which comprised a window vulnerability analysis, a blast component analysis and a progressive collapse analysis, were released on 17 January 2014 and identified a number of structural remediation works that would significantly mitigate the security risk to which staff were exposed. He cautions, however, that while implementation of those measures could be expected to substantially mitigate current risks and decrease the exposure of ESCWA to the risk of a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device, they have to be seen as an interim measure, since any future increase in risk to ESCWA at its current location cannot be fully mitigated.

12. The Secretary-General indicates that, phase 1, which was the blast assessment, will be followed by phase 2 of the project, entailing detailed design work, and phase 3, entailing construction work. He also indicates that the construction work will consist of the following activities: (a) the replacement of the existing shatter-resistant film on the glass facades, which is more than 10 years old; (b) the reinforcement of the facades by installing cable catch systems, consisting of cables anchored to concrete ceilings and floors above and below the facades; and (c) the application of fibre-reinforced polymer strips to the concrete ceiling and floor slabs to improve uplift capacity for the portion of the building that is susceptible owing to the exposure of the structural support columns. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that should the United Nations vacate the building, the Organization would surrender it to the Government in as good a condition as when it was occupied, allowing for reasonable wear and tear. The Committee was further informed that, based on the understanding of the Secretariat, the United Nations

would not be required to restore the building to its state prior to any alterations or changes that may have been executed by the United Nations or the Government.

13. Should the General Assembly approve the project and in line with the timeline as at 3 February 2014 (see A/68/748, para. 23), the project will be completed in a period of 18 months ending in October 2015. In the report of the Secretary-General it is indicated that the project owner would be the Executive Secretary of ESCWA. In line with practices and procedures established for all construction projects at offices away from Headquarters, it is indicated that the ESCWA project team would be supported by the Office of Central Support Services, Department of Management, which would provide technical guidance and advice, including by sharing lessons learned from similar capital projects undertaken by the Organization and senior-level coordination. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to make every effort to shorten the project timeline without compromising the quality of the construction work and the safety of staff.**

IV. Resource requirements

14. The resource requirements for the Secretary-General's proposals for the biennium 2014-2015 amount to $7,306,900 (net of staff assessment) of non-recurrent costs and are summarized by expenditure component and budget section in tables 1 and 2 of his report. They include $380,100 under general temporary assistance for the establishment of two general temporary assistance positions (1 P-4 and 1 Local level); $15,000 under travel of staff for two trips between ESCWA and Headquarters in New York; $4,000 under general operating expenses to cover a one-time provision for office equipment ($3,000) and communication ($1,000) for two staff members on the project team; and $6,907,800 under alteration and improvement to provide for the replacement of shatter-resistant film ($1,258,000), the installation of a cable catch system and geotextile stone retrofit ($4,760,400) and a structural slab retrofit ($536,400), as well as design fees ($353,000) for the security retrofitting work.

Staffing

15. The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General's proposals include the establishment of two temporary positions: one project manager at the P-4 level to be supported by one staff member at the Local level to provide overall administrative assistance. The Secretary-General justifies the requirement by indicating that ESCWA does not have the in-house capacity to oversee the management of the proposed construction activities on a day-to-day basis. Upon request, the Committee was provided with information showing that ESCWA has a total of 358 established posts authorized under the programme budget for 2014-2015, comprising 260 posts under section 22, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, and 98 posts under section 34, Department of Safety and Security. Furthermore, of the posts authorized under section 22, 119 are in the Professional and higher categories, 1 is in the Field Service category, 3 are National Officer posts and 137 are General Service (Local level) posts.

16. **The Advisory Committee recommends the establishment of one position of project manager (P-4) to be funded under general temporary assistance. Taking**

into consideration the number of established General Service (Local level) posts authorized for the 2014-2015 biennium, however, the Committee is of the view that sufficient capacity already exists at the current staffing level to provide the necessary support to the proposed project manager. Therefore, the Committee recommends against the proposed establishment of one temporary Local level position and a corresponding adjustment to the related operational requirements.

Overhead and contingency provisions

17. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with information showing that the estimate of $6,907,800 for construction included provisions for general conditions, profit and overhead (30 per cent), design contingency (20 per cent) and construction contingency (15 per cent) (see annex I). In addition, the information showed that a 20 per cent contingency provision had been included in the estimates for design fees (see annex II).

Overhead

18. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the 30 per cent provision for general conditions, profit and overhead that had been applied to the estimates for the replacement of shatter-resistant film, the installation of a cable catch system and a structural slab retrofit was intended to cover a range of costs that the contractor was likely to incur during the project, including mobilization, administration, supervision, construction equipment, permits, taxes and the contractor's target profit percentage. No further details of these anticipated costs were provided to the Committee. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the provision for overhead costs should be based on a clear and systematic determination, in the absence of which the Committee recommends that a lower provision of 20 per cent for general conditions, profit and overhead be applied.**

Contingency

19. As indicated in paragraph 17 above, the information provided indicates that provisions of 20 per cent and 15 per cent for design and construction contingencies have been included in the estimates for the replacement of shatter-resistant film, the installation of a cable catch system and a structural slab retrofit. Furthermore, the information provided to the Committee indicates that a provision of 20 per cent for contingency has been factored into the estimates for the design fees.

20. The Advisory Committee was informed that the project cost was based on the conceptual design and that the 20 per cent provision for design contingency was intended to cover potential increases in the project cost that would be determined after the detailed design work had been completed. The Committee was informed that the 15 per cent construction contingency was intended to cover unforeseen issues arising after the awarding of the project, which would entail changes in the cost of executing the defined scope of work. The Committee was also informed that the level of contingency had been determined by an analysis of the specific site and project conditions made by the blast engineer (see paras. 10-11 above). The Committee was further informed that the contingency provisions applied to recent capital projects undertaken by the Organization had ranged from 10 to 20 per cent based on the time or stage of the project at which the contingency provision had been established and the specific circumstances of the project.

21. The Advisory Committee notes that there was no mention of contingency in the resource requirements proposed by the Secretary-General in his report. It was only upon request for additional information that it became apparent to the Committee that substantial contingency provisions had been factored into the estimates. **The Committee regrets the omission of such significant information in the presentation of the project's resource requirements.**

22. From the information provided, the Advisory Committee notes that, for shatter-resistant film replacement, cable catch system installation and stone retrofit, as well as slab retrofit, the 20 per cent provision for design contingency has been applied to the construction cost inclusive of a 30 per cent overhead provision. Similarly, the Committee notes that the 15 per cent provision for construction contingency has been applied to a compounded amount that, in addition to a 30 per cent overhead provision, includes a 20 per cent provision for design contingency. **The Committee is of the view that calculating the contingency provision based on compounded cost estimates unduly increases the resource requirements for the project's construction activities. The Committee therefore questions the method used to calculate the contingency provisions.**

23. **The Advisory Committee again recalls the view expressed by the Board of Auditors that a contingency is a specific budgetary provision that is allocated so that a project can quickly address the cost impact of project risks, should they arise, without needing to delay the project and negotiate increased funding. The Committee also recalls the Board's view that contingency funding should not be used as a device to absorb general increases in project costs and that it should be clearly reported how and when such provisions are used (A/68/585, para. 77). Furthermore, the Committee recalls the recommendation of the Board that the Administration develop a risk-based approach to determining, allocating and reporting contingency funds based on best practice in modern project management (A/68/5 (Vol. V), para. 39). Therefore, in the absence of such a systematic risk-based determination of the level of contingency funds for the project, and given the project's comparatively short duration, the Committee recommends that the design and construction contingency provisions for each construction activity of the project, and the contingency provision for the design fees, be set at 10 per cent of estimated costs without compounding.**

Other matters

24. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, by the authority granted to him under paragraph 1 (c) of General Assembly resolution 66/249 relating to unforeseen and extraordinary expenses, the Secretary-General was authorized to enter into commitments of up to a maximum of $226,800 for phase 1 of the project (initial blast assessment). It was explained that, at the time of the preparation of the second performance report on the programme budget for the 2012-2013 biennium, it was anticipated that the provision of $226,800 would cover a blast assessment and the conceptual design work ($100,500), a detailed design ($88,500) and contingencies and allowances ($37,800). The Committee was informed, however, that it was later determined that the contingency provision would not be required and that the planned detailed design work could not be undertaken before the end of the biennium. The Committee was also informed that the actual expenditure for the 2012-2013 biennium for the blast assessment and the conceptual design work amounted to $100,500.

25. The Advisory Committee was further informed, upon enquiry, that resource requirements of $66,500 for the basement upgrade and $374,000 for maintenance, which had been authorized under section 33 of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015, were unrelated to the structural remediation work proposed by the Secretary-General as a result of the findings of the blast assessment carried out in 2013. The Committee was informed that the amount of $66,500 for basement upgrades was to improve working conditions for staff — in terms of better lighting, partitioning and additional work stations — who, for safety reasons, were required to relocate to the basement after 5 p.m., when the streets adjacent to the building were opened to traffic. The Committee was informed that the requirement of $374,000 provided for technical maintenance and support for the existing perimeter access control technology installations.

26. **The Advisory Committee expects to receive detailed information on the implementation of this project in the context of the relevant performance reports.**

V. Recommendation

27. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly are contained in paragraph 34 of the Secretary-General's report. **Taking into account its comments and recommendations expressed in the preceding paragraphs, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly:**

(a) **Approve the proposals of the Secretary-General subject to its comments and recommendations expressed in paragraphs 9, 13, 16 and 21-23 above;**

(b) **Approve the establishment of one temporary position at the P-4 level under section 22, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, of the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015;**

(c) **Appropriate an additional non-recurrent amount of $5,722,400 under the programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 comprising increases under section 22 ($281,800) and section 33, Construction, alteration, improvement and major maintenance ($5,440,600).**

Annex I

Resource requirements for construction, alteration and improvement

Film replacement

Description	*Quantity*	*Unit price (dollars)*	*Amount (dollars)*
Remove existing daylight film; clean and prepare glazing	4 250 m^2	40.00	170 000
New daylight film (3M Safety and Security Window Film Ultra 600 or similar)	4 250 m^2	120.00	510 000
Miscellaneous removal, protection and temporary work	4 250 m^2	5.00	21 250
Subtotal			**701 250**
General conditions, profit and overhead	30 per cent		210 375
Subtotal			**911 625**
Design contingency	20 per cent		182 325
Subtotal			**1 093 950**
Construction contingency	15 per cent		164 093
Total cost of film replacement			**1 258 043**

Cable catch system installation and stone retrofit

Description	*Quantity*	*Unit price (dollars)*	*Amount (dollars)*
Glazed facade			
Cable catch system (Arpal Defender product or similar)	4 250 m^2	370.00	1 572 500
Miscellaneous removal, protection and temporary work	4 250 m^2	25.00	106 250
Stone facade			
Remove wall board insulation and studs	1 280 m^2	210.00	268 800
High-strength geotextile fabric	1 280 m^2	105.00	134 400
New gypsum wall board insulation and studs	1 280 m^2	231.00	295 680
Mechanical, electrical and plumbing modifications and temporary work	1 280 m^2	52.50	67 200
Temporary partitions, dustproofing and protection	1 280 m^2	100.00	128 000
Remove sunshades and trim; reinstall upon completion	448 units	180.00	80 640
Subtotal			**2 653 470**
General conditions, profit and overhead	30 per cent		796 041
Subtotal			**3 449 511**

Description	*Quantity*	*Unit price (dollars)*	*Amount (dollars)*
Design contingency	20 per cent		689 902
Subtotal			**4 139 413**
Construction contingency	15 per cent		620 912
Total cost of cable catch system installation and stone retrofit			**4 760 325**

Slab retrofit

Description	*Quantity*	*Unit price (dollars)*	*Amount (dollars)*
Remove and replace modular partition	200 m^2	125	25 000
Remove floor finish and topping slab	200 m^2	275	55 000
New concrete topping slab; bonding to existing topping slab	200 m^2	250	50 000
Fibreglass reinforced polymer strips	200 m^2	325	65 000
Latex self-levelling compound	200 m^2	100	20 000
Carpet floor finish (assume 4 m^2 for 1 m^2 of retrofit)	200 m^2	220	44 000
Miscellaneous electrical and mechanical	200 m^2	100	20 000
Temporary partitions, dustproofing and protection	200 m^2	100	20 000
Subtotal			**299 000**
General conditions, profit and overhead	30 per cent		89 700
Subtotal			**388 700**
Design contingency	20 per cent		77 740
Subtotal			**466 440**
Construction contingency	15 per cent		69 966
Total cost of slab retrofit			**536 406**

Annex II

Resource requirements for design fees

Design phase (8 weeks)

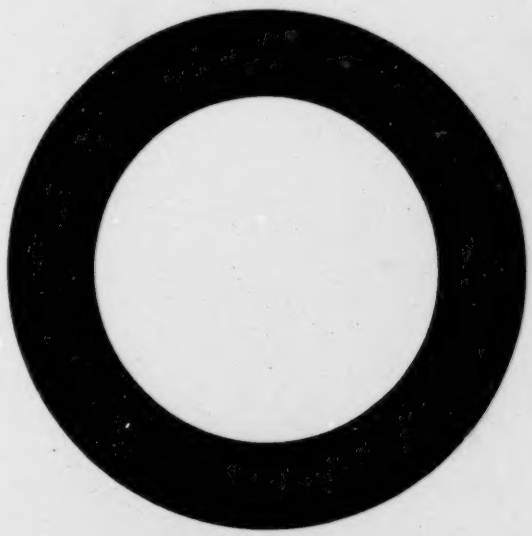
Level	*Billing rate (dollars/hour)*	*Hours*	*Amount (dollars)*
Principal	250	60	15 000
Level 2 engineer	200	105	21 000
Level 3 engineer	150	210	31 500
Computer-aided design and drafting specialist	125	320	40 000
Subtotal			**107 500**
20 per cent contingency			21 500
Total (design phase)			**129 000**

Procurement phase (technical support)

Level	*Billing rate (dollars/hour)*	*Hours*	*Amount (dollars)*
Principal	250	20	5 000
Level 2 engineer	200	80	16 000
Total (procurement phase)			**21 000**

Construction administration phase (36 weeks)

Level	*Billing rate (dollars/hour)*	*Hours*	*Amount (dollars)*
Principal	250	36	9 000
Level 2 engineer	200	144	28 800
Level 3 engineer	150	576	86 400
Computer-aided design and drafting specialist	125	360	45 000
Subtotal			**169 200**
20 per cent contingency			33 840
Total (construction administration phase)			**203 040**
Total design fees			**353 040**



United Nations A/68/809–S/2014/215

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
26 March 2014

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 42
Question of Cyprus

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Letter dated 21 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 18 March 2014 addressed to you by Mehmet Dânâ, Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (see annex).

I would be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Y. Halit **Çevik**
Permanent Representative

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Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 21 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 27 January 2014 addressed to you by the Greek Cypriot representative in New York and circulated as a document of the General Assembly and of the Security Council (A/68/719-S/2014/56), which contains allegations of "illegal and provocative activities by the Turkish air force" within "Cyprus's national airspace and the Nicosia FIR". In this connection, I have the honour to bring to your kind attention the following.

Flights of Turkish aircraft inside the sovereign airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus take place with the full permission and knowledge of the relevant authorities of the State, over which the Greek Cypriot administration in South Cyprus has no jurisdiction or right of say whatsoever. The civil aviation authority of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus is the only competent authority to provide air traffic and aeronautical information services within its own national airspace.

The flights of Italian military GLF-3 aircraft have taken place without prior knowledge and consent of the relevant authorities of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, and thus constitute a clear violation of the sovereignty of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus over its airspace. Needless to say, these flights also created a serious risk for the safety of navigation of civilian aircraft in the region.

The flights of Italian military aircraft that have taken place without the prior knowledge and consent of the relevant authorities of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus have been duly protested by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a letter dated 9 January 2014 addressed to the Italian Embassy in Nicosia (South). The said letter includes the details pertaining to the time, altitude and coordinates of the flights in question. It is noteworthy that violations of the national airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus by Italian military aircraft were recorded on 23 and 30 October and 11, 14 and 15 November 2013, respectively. In the face of these developments and upon the request of relevant authorities of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkish military aircraft undertook preventive action in accordance with international rules in order to identify aircraft violating the airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

There can be no doubt that in the event of the violation of the national airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, similar preventive measures will be taken in exercise of the sovereign rights of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus.

As noted in our previous letters, Greek Cypriot assertions on so-called airspace violations and "interference with civilian and military aircraft" are based on the false and illegal claim that the sovereignty of the Greek Cypriot administration extends over the whole island, including the territory and national airspace of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. This pretentious contention by the Greek Cypriot side ignores the present realities on the ground, namely, the existence of two sovereign, self-governing States on the island of Cyprus, each exercising sovereignty and jurisdiction within its respective territory and airspace.

Availing myself of this opportunity, I would like to put on record, in view of the resumption of talks, that the Turkish Cypriot side is fully committed to finding a lasting settlement of the Cyprus conflict in line with the established United Nations parameters, namely, a new partnership on the basis of the political equality of the two peoples of the island and within the framework of a bizonal, bicommunal federation with two Constituent States of equal status. It is our considered view that if our sincere and constructive approach is reciprocated by the Greek Cypriot side, a long-overdue settlement of the Cyprus problem is achievable in the shortest possible time.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 42, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mehmet **Dânâ**
Representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

United Nations A/68/810–S/2014/207

General Assembly
Security Council

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25 March 2014
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 110
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 21 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I write further to our letters concerning the activities of terrorist groups and entities associated with Al-Qaida in the Syrian Arab Republic, activities in which the Turkish Government is directly involved. On instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit the following information.

Certain States within and beyond the region are working continuously to undermine the political solution to the crisis in Syria. They have persistently opted for violence and terrorism. This morning, armed terrorist groups, most of whose members belonged to the terrorist organizations Nusrah Front and Army of Islam, infiltrated the country from Turkish territory. They attacked the Syrian side, arriving from the Syrian-Turkish border crossing in the Kassab area of northern Ladhiqiyah governorate. When Syrian Arab Army units responded, the Turkish Army provided cover and logistical and military support for the terrorist attack.

Turkey's position underscores its ongoing support for terrorism in the region and its military backing for Al-Qaida and associated organizations, whatever their nomenclature. It contravenes the principles of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the foundations of friendly and neighbourly relations between States.

There can be no question that, by facilitating the passage into Syria of thousands of foreign terrorists, extremists and mercenaries from around the world, and by providing them with funds, weapons and other forms of direct support, the Turkish authorities have flagrantly violated the international counter-terrorism instruments and the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), and 1624 (2005), all of which affirm that all United Nations Member States must refrain from providing any form of support, funding or facilitation, active or passive, to entities or persons involved in terrorist acts.

Please recycle

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic calls on the Security Council to condemn this terrorist attack on Syrian territory from Turkish territory; to condemn Turkey's involvement in, facilitation of and cover for the attack; and to prevail on the Turkish authorities to refrain from providing any form of support, active or passive, for the terrorist activities perpetrated in Syria with the support of Arab, regional and Western States by terrorist groups affiliated with Al-Qaida and its ideology.

The Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that double standards regarding terrorism against the State and people of Syria will only undermine efforts towards a political solution. As a result, terrorism will spread to other countries, particularly those neighbouring States that provide shelter, training and weapons to terrorists and enable them to illegally cross the border into Syria. The effect will be to undermine peace and security in the region and the world.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 110, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/68/811–S/2014/212

General Assembly
Security Council

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1 April 2014
English
Original: Arabic

General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 70 (a)
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 24 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Humanitarian cooperation between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Nations in accordance with Security Council resolution 2139 (2014)

On instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit the following information:

Since the outset of the crisis in Syria, humanitarian needs have grown and gained prominence as terrorism has escalated. Armed terrorist groups have entered and occupied densely populated regions, villages and urban areas. They have spread panic and terror among the population, which they have forcibly detained as human shields. They have secured and destroyed public facilities and State service providers, preventing the local population from accessing basic services. In view of that situation, and in the light of its constitutional responsibilities and its duty to protect its citizens, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has endeavoured to restore security and stability throughout the national territory and provide basic services for its citizens.

The armed terrorist groups have deliberately, systematically and extensively sabotaged the country's infrastructure and public service institutions. In addition, the unilateral measures imposed by certain States have affected the living conditions of Syrian civilians. As a result, humanitarian needs have expanded even as the capacity to respond has been stretched. Since 2012, the Syrian Government has therefore been working with the United Nations and other international humanitarian organizations, formulating a succession of plans to respond to humanitarian needs in Syria. The most recent is the 2014 response plan, which was agreed a few months ago.

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The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic is convinced that the humanitarian crisis that has emerged in many parts of Syria cannot be tackled solely by providing emergency supplies for the population. Rather, it is essential to address the roots of the problem and its escalation. First and foremost, that means combating and eradicating foreign-backed terrorism in order to protect civilians from terrorist crimes, which have indiscriminately claimed a growing number of Syrian lives, and to restore safety, stability and normality. It is also important to rescind the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States of America, its allies in the European Union and certain Arab States. Those measures have had a negative impact on the living conditions of Syrian civilians, impeding the delivery of such basic needs as food, medicine, medical supplies and basic services.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic therefore welcomed the contents of Security Council resolution 2139 (2014) concerning the humanitarian situation in Syria. The resolution refers plainly to the need to combat and eradicate terrorism. In so doing, it clearly recognizes the connection between the emergence and growth of humanitarian needs and the crimes of the armed terrorist groups. In a statement issued on 23 February 2014, the Government affirmed that it would continue to cooperate with the United Nations in order to provide and deliver humanitarian aid to those affected by the crisis in all governorates of Syria without distinction. It stressed its readiness to cooperate with the United Nations Resident Coordinator and with international humanitarian organizations active in Syria in order to determine mechanisms to implement the resolution based on respect for the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the guiding principles of United Nations humanitarian assistance in emergency situations, particularly respect for national sovereignty and the role of the State in supervising the distribution of humanitarian assistance in its territory.

Below is an overview of the cooperation in place between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Nations, and the steps that have been taken in that context.

I. Establishment of a joint Government-United Nations committee

In accordance with the Syrian official statement, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates and the United Nations Resident Coordinator met at the Ministry on 2 March 2014 and agreed to establish a joint Government-United Nations committee to formulate and approve a cooperation mechanism. The committee has met four times for guidance and operational purposes on 7, 10, 17 and 20 March 2014 respectively. It held in-depth discussions to identify those areas in which aid delivery faces particular difficulties and obstacles, and to determine the priorities in securing access. The committee agreed to plan aid convoys to those areas jointly; to identify civilians' needs and the means for their direct delivery; and to examine reports on implementation, access routes and entry points. Such action would avoid the problems that have affected aid convoys in certain areas, such as the abduction of International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) personnel in Idlib governorate, which was caused by failure to coordinate with the Government or to follow the safe routes that the Government had suggested.

II. Access to the areas referenced in the Security Council resolution

1. Mu'addamiyat al-Sham

The Syrian Government requested the deployment of humanitarian assistance in cooperation with the United Nations to Mu'addamiyah and Adra al-'Ummaliyah. On 25 February 2014, the office of the Resident Coordinator stated in writing that the United Nations was prepared to deploy a joint inter-agency aid convoy to Mu'addamiyah. On 27 February 2014, the Syrian Government informed the United Nations of its agreement for the convoy to enter Mu'addamiyah on Sunday, 2 March 2014. However, on the agreed date, the United Nations refrained from deploying the convoy and, by memorandum of the same day, requested a delay in responding to the appeal of the population of Mu'addamiyah. On 18 March 2014, a United Nations convoy crossed the last military checkpoint, bringing humanitarian aid into Mu'addamiyah for direct distribution to the local population in cooperation with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent. The Syrian Government did everything necessary to facilitate its entry, but the convoy withdrew after being blocked by a number of local inhabitants. A local dignitary said that the people refused to accept the United Nations aid. In short, the Syrian Government has twice agreed to the deployment of the aid, on 2 and 17 March 2014 respectively; but the United Nations has been unable to deliver it owing to the stance of the population in Mu'addamiyah.

2. Adra al-'Ummaliyah

Although the Syrian Government gave its written approval to the Resident Coordinator on 11 and 13 March 2014, the United Nations has been unable to deliver aid to Adra al-'Ummaliyah. It made three attempts, on 11, 12 and 13 March 2014 respectively, but could not gain the agreement of the armed groups active in the area. The office of the Resident Coordinator stated that it had been unable to obtain the other side's approval for the entry of aid to Adra al-'Ummaliyah or Adra al-Balad. By memorandum of 13 March 2014, it requested that aid delivery should be postponed until such a time as the United Nations could ensure coordination with all parties.

3. Eastern Ghutah

In memorandums addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates on 27 February 2014, the United Nations sought agreement for aid convoys to Duma, Nashabiyah and Mulayhah in the eastern Ghutah. The office of the Resident Coordinator then requested, by memorandum of 2 March 2014, that the field visits to those areas should be postponed until the period from 13 to 20 March 2014 to allow for preparations to deploy convoys to Mu'addamiyah and Adra al-'Ummaliyah. The Syrian Government responded by memorandum of 12 March 2014 that the delivery of aid to those areas would need to be planned by the joint committee, in accordance with the agreement between the sides. On 16 May 2014, the Government notified the office of the Resident Coordinator that it approved the deployment of humanitarian aid to Duma town, in the eastern Ghutah, from 17 March 2014, on the understanding that the joint committee would be involved in identifying needs and access routes and determining how the United Nations and the Red Crescent would supervise the direct distribution of aid. On 19 March 2014, the United Nations again sought approval for the deployment of an aid convoy to Duma town on 20 March. The Syrian Government agreed by memorandum of 19 March.

Pursuant to that agreement, the United Nations has informed us that it has deployed a convoy of aid, vaccines and milk for children to Duma on 20 March, and that it has distributed those goods in cooperation with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent.

Efforts towards national reconciliation have proved successful in various parts of the eastern Ghutah. As a result, it has been possible to deliver aid to those areas, the population has been able to return, and State institutions have been restored. The latter have worked to rebuild the damaged infrastructure and public service networks in the region. The most significant areas in which national reconciliation has been successful and the population has returned are Bab Bila, Bayt Saham and Yalda. The Syrian Arab Red Crescent delivered and handed out aid packages to 6,200 people on 19 February and to 12,000 people over four successive days from 23 February. The Red Crescent used mobile surgeries to dispense medical aid. Reconciliation has also allowed a return to normality; the inhabitants' needs have been met, and they have been able to return safely to their homes. That situation shows that humanitarian needs are reduced, and the obstacles to humanitarian aid disappear, as soon as the terrorist threat recedes.

A joint team of United Nations entities brought humanitarian aid to the town of Jadidat al-Shaybani, in Rif Dimashq, on 16 January 2014 and to the town of Ghizlaniyah, also in Rif Dimashq, on 18 January 2014.

4. Nubul and Zahra

The Syrian Government has repeatedly asked the United Nations to deliver emergency humanitarian aid to the towns of Nubul and Zahra, whose population has been under a merciless siege for over 600 days without access to food, medicine or any basic needs. In order to reaffirm those previous requests, on 2 March 2014, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates sent a memorandum to the office of the Resident Coordinator requesting the delivery of aid to the two towns rapidly and as a matter of priority. Despite the current discussions, the United Nations has yet to do so. At the meeting of the joint committee on 17 March 2014, the Syrian Government agreed to the distribution of humanitarian aid to several villages in which armed terrorist groups are present, on the road to Nubul and Zahra, and approved a route to those locations from inside the city of Aleppo.

5. Yarmouk camp

During the period from 18 January to 21 March 2014, a total of 8,464 aid packages have been delivered to Yarmouk camp, in addition to bread, dates and milk. 3,879 civilians in a serious medical condition have been evacuated along with their close relatives, as have 150 pupils and students who can now continue their studies at Syrian schools and universities. Between 28 February and 17 March 2014, the aid delivery and evacuations were interrupted because armed terrorist groups had returned to the camp and attacked its civilian inhabitants, keeping them away from the aid delivery area. From 1 March, several attempts to deliver the humanitarian aid were thwarted by armed groups. On 17 March, at the food aid distribution centre on Ramah Street in Yarmouk camp, they opened fire on representatives of the General Administration for Palestinian Arab Refugees and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), after preventing civilians from reaching the location to receive aid and vaccinations and to evacuate the sick. A Palestine Red Crescent emergency vehicle attempted to drive

out of the camp to the delivery location, but it came under fire from terrorist snipers and gunmen. In the period from 19 to 21 March 2014 alone, despite coming under daily sniper fire and gunfire from the armed terrorist groups, UNRWA and the Palestine Red Crescent were able to bring 1,215 food packages and vaccinations and milk for children into the camp, and to evacuate 65 individuals in a serious medical condition. The Syrian Government continues to facilitate the delivery of aid and civilian needs to the camp in cooperation with the concerned Palestinian parties and UNRWA.

6. Old city of Homs

In Homs governorate, the Government authorities have worked with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and the United Nations working group to evacuate 1,366 civilians from the old city of Homs from Friday, 7 February 2014, and to provide them immediately with emergency medical treatment and direct assistance. The evacuated civilians were taken to their chosen places of residence, in accordance with their wishes. Temporary places of residence were provided to 124 civilians. Food aid was delivered, although the aid convoy came under armed attack twice before reaching the old city of Homs.

7. Other problematic areas in which aid has been delivered and distributed

On 7 March 2014, in cooperation with United Nations entities, the Homs branch of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent deployed two convoys of emergency aid to Hulah and Shin in Homs governorate. On 12 March 2014, in cooperation with the International Committee of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the Raqqah branch of the Syrian Arab Red Crescent arranged to receive a 24-truck convoy of emergency supplies. In February 2014, 3,500 food packages were delivered to Ariha and 3,500 to Salqin, both in Idlib governorate. Humanitarian supplies have been delivered to other areas where access is difficult. For instance, supplies were delivered to Basr al-Harir village in Dar'a governorate on 28 February 2014; to the Barzah district of Damascus governorate on 27 February 2014; and to Dayr al-Zawr city and the rural districts of Abu Kamal, Mayadin, the subdistrict of Mahasin and other locations on 27 February 2014.

III. Cross-border aid delivery

When the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates met with the Resident Coordinator on 18 November 2013, he notified him formally that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic agreed to the delivery of United Nations emergency and humanitarian supplies into Syrian territory through the official border crossings with neighbouring States. The supplies would then be distributed through the main United Nations offices in Damascus and the branch offices in the governorates. When the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Expatriates met with the Resident Coordinator on 4 March 2014, he said that the Syrian Government agreed that the United Nations could use the Nusaybin border crossing with Turkey to bring humanitarian aid into the country and respond to the needs of Hasakah governorate. The Ministry confirmed its approval to the United Nations in writing on 12 March 2014. The United Nations began bringing humanitarian aid into the city of Qamishli through the crossing on 20 March 2014.

The humanitarian crisis in Hasakah governorate has been exacerbated because armed terrorist groups have cut off the overland route from the governorates of Dayr al-Zawr and Raqqah, preventing the United Nations from transporting humanitarian aid to Hasakah. The Syrian Government has therefore agreed to airlift aid from Irbil in Iraq to Qamishli airport in Syria. To date, four airlifts have been organized, with over 12 flights per airlift. In total, some 50 flights have brought humanitarian aid to Qamishli airport in order to cover Hasakah governorate.

The United Nations has continued to deliver humanitarian assistance across the Lebanese border. In response to a memorandum of 19 March 2014 from the World Food Programme, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave its approval by memorandum of 20 March 2014 for the delivery of food aid across the Nasib border crossing with Jordan in order to cover Dar'a and Suwayda governorates.

The Syrian Government emphasizes that the United Nations and international humanitarian organizations active in Syria must respect Syria's national sovereignty and territorial integrity, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2139 (2014), the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law.

IV. Expansion of humanitarian relief operations

1. Opening of United Nations branch offices in five Syrian governorates

In 2013, the Syrian Government informed the United Nations that it agreed to the opening of branch offices in Suwayda governorate (to cover the South), the city of Qamishli in Hasakah governorate (for the North-East) and in Aleppo (for the North). Approval had previously been given for United Nations branch offices in Homs (for the central region) and Tartus (for the coastal region). With those five branch offices and its main office in Damascus, the United Nations is now in a position to meet humanitarian needs in the entire Syrian Arab Republic.

2. Facilitation and clarification of visa issuance procedures

The Syrian Government has addressed the concerns raised by the United Nations with regard to facilitating and clarifying the procedures for granting entry visas to staff members of international organizations active in Syria who have United Nations travel documents and wish to enter the country on contracts with those organizations or for temporary work visits. By memorandum of 3 March 2014, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates informed the office of the Resident Coordinator of the new procedures.

It should be noted that the figures previously provided to the Security Council on entry visas that had not been approved are inaccurate. The Syrian Government has issued over 400 entry visas since it began collaborating with the United Nations on relief efforts; only 12 visa applications remain pending. Using the new mechanism, efforts are being made to expedite the issuance of entry visas to Safety and Security personnel.

3. Streamlining of procedures to facilitate humanitarian convoys

The competent Syrian authorities, the Resident Coordinator and the representatives of international organizations are discussing ways to adopt a new

mechanism to simplify procedures to facilitate humanitarian convoys and ensure their smooth passage through military checkpoints. A new mechanism has been adopted for that purpose, but there have been some gaps in implementation. The joint Government-United Nations team further discussed the mechanism on 17 March 2014 and explored possible alternatives.

4. International non-governmental organizations

The Syrian Government has taken the necessary steps to facilitate the humanitarian work of international non-governmental organizations, including by allowing site visits to projects carried out in the Syrian governorates in cooperation with Government authorities. International non-governmental organizations have signed memorandums of understanding with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent and, in some cases, with the ministries responsible for their area of activity. There are currently 18 international non-governmental organizations active in Syria, and the Government is facilitating their work. At the same time, Syria stresses that they must abide by the memorandums of understanding that they have concluded, which govern their work inside the country.

5. Civil society associations and domestic non-governmental organizations

The Ministry of Social Affairs has approved a list of 137 civil society associations and domestic non-governmental organizations that can cooperate with United Nations humanitarian organizations to meet the humanitarian needs of all Syrian governorates. The Syrian Government is working to periodically expand the base of domestic civil society associations that have the capacity to cooperate with the United Nations in this area.

V. Protection of civilians

Since the Syrian crisis began, armed terrorist groups have been terrorizing innocent civilians by committing the most heinous crimes, including beheadings; consuming human hearts, livers and skin in public places; carrying out public executions; raping women and children; targeting residential areas and civilian homes, schools and hospitals with car bombs and indiscriminate daily shellfire in a number of governorates, particularly Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Ladhiqiyah; and destroying infrastructure and service facilities. The Syrian Government wrote to the Security Council in August 2013 listing 225 crimes of rape committed by the armed terrorist groups against Syrian women. It wrote a second letter in September 2013 regarding the suffering of women as a result of the fatwa on "sexual jihad". It sent two identical letters on crimes against children in November 2013. The letters gave documented details of violations committed against children, including child recruitment, killing, mutilation, sexual violence, targeting of schools and hospitals, and detention in exchange for monetary ransom or to pressure families to change their position. An additional report on the armed terrorist groups' crimes against children was sent in February 2014.

In fulfilling its constitutional duty to protect citizens from the criminal actions of armed terrorist groups, the Syrian State has assiduously strived to ensure that civilians are not affected by the military operations that are taking place in certain parts of the country. In cooperation with the United Nations and the International

Committee of the Red Cross, the Government seeks to evacuate civilians, whom armed terrorist groups are using as human shields, from hot spots. For example, working in cooperation with the United Nations, the Government was able to evacuate hundreds of civilians from the old city of Homs in March 2014. In November 2013, it worked with the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to evacuate civilians from Mu'addamiyah. On 12 March 2014, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent established centres to provide assistance and vital services to some 1,980 civilians who had been evacuated from the area of Husn (Krak) in Rif Homs.

VI. Attacks on hospitals, schools and other civilian facilities

1. Schools

In several of its reports, the United Nations noted that it had received reports that schools in many parts of Syria were being used for military purposes. However it also said that it had not received any specific information to confirm those reports. After writing to the Ministry of Education and other relevant Government agencies, the Organization was informed that armed terrorist groups were using schools in the areas in which they operated as training, torture and detention centres. The terrorists were also using the schools to store munitions and as bomb-making facilities, particularly vocational secondary schools. While the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates stands ready to cooperate with United Nations organizations operating in Syria in the investigation of these accounts, it wishes to stress that the Organization's reports should be based on documented and credible information (see annex for a list of the schools that, according to the reports of the Ministry of Education, have been vandalized or used for illicit purposes in the areas in which armed terrorist groups are present).

2. Hospitals

From the start of the events in Syria, armed terrorist group have systematically targeted the health sector, with a view to rendering the State incapable of providing essential services to Syrian citizens. Terrorist attacks have resulted in the destruction of 64 hospitals, 471 health centres and 412 ambulances. Armed terrorist groups have also occupied 32 hospitals in various parts of Syria and taken over 154 health centres (see annex for a list of targeted hospitals and health centres). For example, on 26 November 2013, a horrific massacre was committed at Dayr Atiyah Hospital in Rif Dimashq. The hospital's entire medical staff, including doctors and other health workers, were killed. Such crimes and the targeting of the health sector have made it necessary to use the military to protect some of these facilities against attacks by armed terrorist groups.

3. Infrastructure

As part of their systematic campaign of destruction, armed terrorist groups have been targeting the country's infrastructure in order to deprive civilians of vital services on which they rely. The terrorists have targeted electrical power stations, oil and gas pipelines, water treatment stations, grain silos, the road network, bridges, railways, telephone lines and pharmaceutical factories, causing material damage that is estimated to amount to billions of Syrian pounds.

4. Cultural legacy and historical sites

Armed terrorist groups have systematically destroyed and plundered several historical sites and monuments in Syria and converted them into military facilities. Moreover, they have carried out unauthorized excavation, causing great damage to Syria's cultural and human heritage and its people's history and cultural identity. The terrorists' crimes include the burning of the old market of Aleppo (the oldest market in the world), the Great Umayyad Mosque in Aleppo and many mosques, churches and monasteries in various Syrian cities. These groups, which espouse fundamentalist and takfirist ideology, did not even spare the statues of Syrian writers and scholars. They decapitated the statue of the famous Arab poet Abu al-'Ala al-Ma'arri in Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, Idlib governorate, and vandalized and destroyed the shrines of some saints and the companions of the Prophet. Such conduct is reminiscent of the destruction by the Taliban of statues of the Buddha and the vandalization and destruction of saints' shrines in Mali. The Syrian Government has called on the relevant United Nations organizations to put pressure on those States that support the terrorist groups to halt their repeated attacks against Syria's historical legacy, and to put pressure on neighbouring States to control their borders and halt the illicit transboundary trade in looted Syrian artefacts.

VII.

The Syrian Government is taking action to address cases involving the arrest of a number of local United Nations staff members. It emphasizes, however, that staff members must abide by their professional code of conduct and the laws of the country. On 20 March 2014, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates provided the office of the Resident Coordinator with relevant information, some of it regarding cases in which local staff members had been tried by the competent judicial authorities because they had perpetrated, supported or facilitated terrorist crimes in Syria.

VIII. Provision of medical services

1. Child vaccinations

Syria has made significant progress in protecting children from various diseases and providing them with health care. Numerous diseases were non-existent before the crisis; polio, for example, had been eradicated in 1996. However, according to analysis by the World Health Organization, a polio virus strain that originated outside the country has now spread through certain areas of Syria. It has been shown conclusively that the virus was introduced by terrorists coming from abroad.

Despite many challenges, the Syrian Government continues to fulfil its duty to vaccinate children in all parts of the country, especially against polio, including in areas where armed terrorist groups are active. To that end, the Government has cooperated with specialized United Nations entities and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent to implement several monthly polio vaccination campaigns. The first, which took place in December 2013, successfully vaccinated over 2.5 million children, and approximately 2,873,000 children have been vaccinated in March 2014. These national campaigns are set to continue. The Syrian Government has decided that, in the areas it reaches, it will also provide milk to children being vaccinated.

2. Ensuring access to health care

Despite the difficulties resulting from terrorist attacks on health-care centres, the Syrian Government has consistently fulfilled its duty to provide Syrian citizens across the country with health care, including in problematic areas. It dispatches mobile clinics and provides medical facilities with the necessary supplies, including refrigeration equipment, vaccines and medicines. The Government has continued to pay health-care workers' wages in all areas, including those infiltrated by terrorist groups, and has trained volunteers to provide health-care services to the local inhabitants.

The Syrian Government has been striving to ensure that citizens everywhere receive medical and health-care services. When providing medical supplies, the United Nations must coordinate with the Ministry of Health to ensure that the supplies reach those truly in need, and are not stolen by armed terrorist groups in certain areas in order to treat their wounded. The Syrian Government is considering alternative ways to successfully deliver medical aid to civilians, as it has noticed that certain United Nations entities have used convoys to deliver medical equipment intended for specialist medical facilities to areas where no such facilities exist, thereby making it likely that the equipment will be seized by armed men and terrorists. The United Nations humanitarian aid convoy to Mu'addamiyah on 19 March 2014 included a wide range of medicines and medical supplies in huge quantities, even though it was unclear which medical facility in Mu'addamiyah would be able to use them.

IX. Concluding observations

1. Armed terrorist groups are present in many parts of Syria. They have attacked infrastructure and Government service providers, blocked major roads to disrupt civilians' movements, denied civilians their basic need and used them as human shields. The result has been a deep and worsening humanitarian crisis. The Syrian Government welcomes the fact that the Security Council has recognized the connection and, in resolution 2139 (2014), has affirmed the importance of combating and eradicating terrorism. The Syrian Government emphasizes that its authorities continue to fulfil their Constitutional duty to protect Syrian citizens from armed terrorist groups, while also striving to ensure that military operations to not affect civilians.

2. By ending their support for armed terrorist groups, State sponsors of terrorism would make it possible to address the root causes of the humanitarian crisis in many parts of Syria. Although certain States invoke their concern for the lives of Syrians and the importance of meeting Syrians' basic needs, they bear responsibility: first, for the crimes of the armed terrorist groups, for which they provide funds, arms, training and shelter, and second, for imposing the unilateral coercive measures that are worsening Syrians' living conditions and impairing their ability to meet their basic needs, including food and medicine. As if that were not enough, those States are shirking their commitment to provide the necessary funding for the Syria Crisis Humanitarian Response Plan, which was endorsed by the United Nations in cooperation with the Syrian Government. Indeed, only 9 per cent of the Plan has been funded at the time of writing.

3. The Syrian Government has recently adopted a series of measures to allow the United Nations to expand its humanitarian activities. However, there has been a lack of genuine coordination with the Government to determine response priorities,

effective needs, type of aid required and access routes. This has caused chaos, waste and numerous gaps that require earnest attention. The Syrian Government therefore emphasizes that the joint Government-United Nations team must realistically evaluate and jointly plan humanitarian aid convoys by identifying needs and the types of aid required, supervising aid distribution and ensuring transparency, responsibility and credibility in order to avoid chaos, waste and looting or theft by armed terrorist groups.

4. If efforts to deliver humanitarian assistance to all areas of Syria are to prove successful, they must be based on the guidelines regulating the emergency assistance of the United Nations as set forth in General Assembly resolution 46/182, particularly the principles of neutrality, impartiality, non-politicization of humanitarian work and respect for national sovereignty. Aid has not been delivered to certain areas besieged by armed groups, such as Nubul and Zahra in the Aleppo countryside. Instead, the focus has been on delivering aid to areas in which armed terrorist groups prevail, including areas where there are no civilians. This situation undoubtedly calls into question the true aims of the politicized approach adopted by certain donor States, which are intent on inflaming the Syrian crisis, and by certain international officials.

5. Syria emphasizes that the humanitarian situation must not be used for political gain, whether by citing unverified estimates to provide inflated figures of persons in need, displaced, killed and injured in Syria, or by delivering statements in New York and certain capitals and taking action at the United Nations to exploit the suffering of Syrians and serve the agendas of certain States that are involved in the Syrian crisis. Conversely, the United Nations and its entities active in Syria have reported on the scale their humanitarian operations and aid delivery to many hot spots. Those figures clearly confirm the extent to which the Syrian Government has cooperated with the organizations. The World Food Programme distributes food aid to 3.7 million persons a month across Syria, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees brought aid to some four million people in 2013. Those facts refute certain statements, which are divorced from reality, that question the cooperation of the Syrian Government in order to mislead international public opinion and serve the agenda of armed terrorist groups and their State sponsors. The Syrian Government insists once again that the civilian character of refugee camps in neighbouring States must be preserved, and that the needs of Syrian refugees across the border must not be exploited for political purposes.

6. In its reports on the situation in Syria, the United Nations Secretariat continues to recycle certain biased and subjective international reports for specific political ends. Syria warns of the consequences of that approach. United Nations reports on the humanitarian situation in Syria must be based on objective realities on the ground and on the United Nations country team reports. They should avoid making politicized accusations that violate international humanitarian law and human rights. The Organization must act in accordance with the United Nations resolutions that govern its work, instead of relying unilateral legal arguments.

I should be grateful if this letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 70 (a), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic
to the United Nations

Annex to the identical letters dated 24 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Educational institutions vandalized and used for illicit purposes by armed terrorist groups

Governorate	*Number*
Damascus	72
Rif Dimashq	68
Dar'a	5
Qunaytirah	196
Aleppo	2 527
Homs	85
Hama	84
Idlib	76
Raqqah	33
Hasakah	31
Dayr al-Zawr	30
Ladhiqiyah	102
Total	**3 309**

Hospitals and health-care centres vandalized and rendered inactive by armed terrorist groups

Governorate	*Hospitals*	*Health-care centres*
Damascus	–	12
Rif Dimashq	6	52
Dar'a	3	37
Qunaytirah	–	19
Aleppo	6	49
Homs	2	2
Hama	1	1
Idlib	1	–
Raqqah	5	58
Hasakah	1	2
Dayr al-Zawr	7	22
Ladhiqiyah	–	8
Total	**32**	**262**

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Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 76
Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 24 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/37 B, a workshop was held in Chennai, India, from 27 to 29 January 2014, under the auspices of the United Nations, in support of the first phase of the first assessment cycle of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects. I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the workshop (see annex).

I kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 76.

(*Signed*) Asoke K. **Mukerji**

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Annex to the letter dated 24 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Report of the eighth workshop held under the auspices of the United Nations in support of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects

Chennai, India, 27-29 January 2014

I. Background

1. The Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects at its fourth meeting recommended that a workshop be organized for the northern Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden and the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME)/Regional Commission for Fisheries (RECOFI) areas, under the auspices of the United Nations. The Earth System Science Organization (ESSO)-Ministry of Earth Sciences, the nodal Ministry of the Government of India, as a State party to the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, hosted this workshop to facilitate the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects. The Ministry designated the ESSO-National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai, India, as the venue, and the Director, ESSO-NIOT, as the nodal person, to conduct the workshop.

2. The workshop was funded and conducted by the Ministry of Earth Sciences of India, the host country, in close coordination with the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat of the United Nations. The workshop was conducted in accordance with the modified agenda approved on day 1 (see annex I).[a] It was attended by 38 delegates, including 6 delegates who participated through a video bridge (for the list of participants, see annex II).

II. Proceedings of the workshop

3. Dr. Shailesh Nayak, Secretary, ESSO, Ministry of Earth Sciences, inaugurated the workshop. In his opening address, he mentioned that regular monitoring of the seas is crucial, considering the rise in anthropogenic activities. The Director, ESSO-NIOT, welcomed all the participants to the eighth workshop, held in support of the first cycle of the Regular Process. The representative of the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea and Secretary of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole of the Regular Process, made opening remarks on behalf of the United Nations Legal Counsel. She said that the workshop would provide an opportunity to identify the most significant issues for the northern Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea,

[a] All the annexes to the report are available from the Regular Process website (www.un.org/Depts/los/global_reporting/global_reporting.htm).

the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and the ROPME/RECOFI areas. It would pave the best way to mobilize information on assessments and initiate capacity-building for integrated assessments.

4. The host country nominated the Director, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)-National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) and former member of the Group of Experts for Assessment of Assessments, as the Chair of the Workshop in accordance with the guidelines of the workshops. He noted limited participation by the Member States of the region, which needs serious attention. He also commented on the lack of formal assessments from the region, in spite of many scientific studies and publications. He stated that a large part of the northern Indian Ocean falling within the exclusive economic zones remains unexplored. He suggested close networking and collaboration between the countries of the region, to address basin-wide linkages between coastal processes, and other scientific issues faced by the region. After formal introduction of the participants, the Chair outlined the objectives of the workshop. The purpose of the workshop, as stipulated by the guidelines, is to review and evaluate all assessments considered by the participants to be relevant to the sea area under consideration and, on the basis of these evaluations, to compile an inventory of assessments, related to environmental and socioeconomic issues, likely to be useful for the Regular Process.

5. The representative of the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea presented an overview of the evolution and the structure of the Regular Process. This was followed by a question and answer session. To the queries on the limited availability of data from regions with limited access, such as coastal waters of the least developed nations, she replied that these could be identified as gaps in the assessments. She also added that a summary of the workshop would go to Member States and that further assessments might be carried out in the future.

6. The Director, ESSO-NIOT, briefed the workshop on the role of various Indian organizations in the region, such as the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), the CSIR-NIO, ESSO-the Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management Project Directorate (ICMAM-PD), ESSO-the Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE), ESSO-the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), ESSO-NIOT, and others, in the assessment of the state of the marine environment. This was followed by a general discussion. To the queries on inclusion of management aspects of the coastal zone in the workshop, the representative of the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea replied that policy and management aspects are not covered in the assessment. The Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea representative emphasized that policy decisions should not be part of the first global integrated marine assessment.

7. The Joint Coordinator of the Group of Experts, joined through a video bridge from the United Kingdom and made a general presentation on the aims, scope and outcome of the workshop (see annex III). He discussed the building blocks for achieving integrated assessment. He adopted a cross-cutting and illustrative approach to describe the frameworks for discussion, such as, ocean processes and circulation, developmental activities, integrated assessment of biodiversity, among others. This was followed by a question and answer session, wherein he emphasized the importance of the impact of microbes on ecology and the relevance of income

and injury to fish-workers on socioeconomics. He further listed 15 important human activities requiring immediate focus (annex IV).

8. The representative of the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea explained the template recommended for preparing the inventory of assessments. Thereafter, the chair organized the participants into three break-out groups: Group 1: Biophysics and biogeochemistry; Group 2: Biodiversity and food security; Group 3: Socioeconomics and capacity-building. The various chapters of the template were assigned to various groups.

9. The representative of the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP), Sri Lanka, joined the discussion through a video bridge and sent two reports for consideration while making the inventory. The session on day 1 ended with a discussion in break-out groups.

10. The session on day 2 started with presentations by the coordinators of the five themes (biophysics and biogeochemistry, food security, socioeconomic aspects, marine biodiversity and capacity-building (annexes V, VI, VII, VIII and IX, respectively)).

Theme 1: Biophysics and biogeochemistry

11. The theme coordinator of biophysics and biogeochemistry presented an overview of the assessments carried out on ocean physics, biogeochemistry, sea-level variations, eutrophication, harmful algal blooms and marine pollution (see annex V). He said that 36 assessments were available from the Global and Regional Assessments of the Marine Environment Database (GRAMED) for the south-eastern Asian Seas, of which 27 assessments contained information pertaining to the above subject areas. He stated that the water quality of the Indian coast had constantly been monitored at 88 stations until 2010 and has been monitored seasonally at 20 stations since 2011 under the Coastal Ocean Monitoring and Prediction System (COMAPS) programme of ESSO-Ministry of Earth Sciences. These observations indicated elevated nutrient concentrations at a few sites and a relatively high pathogenic bacterial population at many others. The gaps in knowledge were identified for topics such as ocean acidification, carbon sequestration, air-sea fluxes, and others.

Theme 2: Food security

12. There was a presentation on the major assessments made and the spatio-temporal range (see annex VI). The gaps and capacity-building needs pertaining to food security aspects were listed. The major aspects, such as the structural shift in the capital investment in fishing units from traditional to mechanized units, extension of oil sardine fishery to the north-east and north-west coast of India, migration of mackerel to deeper waters and shift in the threadfin bream breeding season were emphasized. The assessment of deep sea fish/shrimp catch, ecologically sensitive habitat, coral reef diversity, myctophid fish abundance, natural seed abundance, vulnerability of coastal states, impacts on fish phenology, impact of climate change on fish distribution, marine fish stock, fisheries ecosystem, environment and habitat, recruitment strength, marine mammals, seabirds, impacts of bivalve farming, estimates of the carbon footprint of fishing industries and the impact of ocean acidification on meroplankton were identified as the major gap areas. In the ensuing discussions, the Chair of the workshop pointed out that an

integrated assessment of the impact of hypoxia on fisheries along the west coast of India is also required.

Theme 3: Socioeconomic aspects

13. The theme coordinator of socioeconomic aspects presented an overview of the assessments made on education, level of participation in fisheries, types of subsidiary occupation, religion, membership in cooperatives, assets owned and other socioeconomic aspects of the fishermen community (see annex VII). He stated that a survey at the national level on these aspects is conducted every five years. Assessments were also made of the extent of indebtedness among marine fishermen in mechanized, motorized and traditional fisheries sectors; the impact of microfinance institutions on coastal indebtedness; the impact of a ban on trawling on marine fisheries during the monsoon; the impact of remote sensing on fisheries technology, society and government; impacts of coastal aquaculture and unsustainable development practices on the coastal ecosystem; scaling up of coastal aquaculture, seawater desalination technologies; marine protected areas and loss of livelihoods; and indigenous technical knowledge in the marine fisheries sector. He recommended capacity-building for diversification in traditional fishing practices in the northern Indian Ocean region. The Chair of the workshop remarked that better cooperation is required between natural and social scientists. An expert from CSIR-NIO stated that reports on coastal development and livelihood are available with the International Collective in Support of Fish Workers.

Theme 4: Marine biodiversity

14. The theme coordinator of marine biodiversity stated that the northern Indian Ocean region is expected to have rich biological diversity, but the Ocean Biogeographic Information System database has only 34,989 records of species from the Indian Ocean, including plantae (1,690 species), animalia (30,894 species), archaea (4 species), bacteria (864 species), chromista (773 species), fungi (75 species) and protozoa (689 species) (see annex VIII). He reported that there are no systematic assessments on a regional scale, resulting in considerable data and information gaps, in spite of a large number of theses and publications. He also noted that there were few coastal and marine biodiversity records from areas beyond national jurisdiction and that minor phyla, such as nemertina, gnathostomulida, rotifera, priapulida, nematomorpha, entoprocta and pycnogonidia are not represented so far in the Indian coastal and marine biodiversity records, perhaps because of a lack of expertise. He recommended consolidation of all available information and synthesis of a comprehensive report on coastal and marine biodiversity of the northern Indian Ocean, regular revalidation of reports (once every five years), regional networking of the Indian Ocean Rim countries to generate coastal and marine biodiversity information on areas beyond national jurisdiction, the deep seafloor and on marine microbes and a consortium of Indian Ocean Rim countries to promote capacity-building and ensure regular assessments of coastal and marine biodiversity.

15. While commenting about mangrove diversity, the theme coordinator mentioned substantial growth in mangrove cover in Goa from 0 to 22 sq. km. To this, the workshop Chair remarked that this information is not factual, since the mangrove cover in Goa was never zero. It was clarified that the views reported are consistent with the reports of the Ministry of Environment and Forests of the

Government of India, and that the earlier reports of the Ministry of Environment and Forests had not included the pockets of mangroves found in Kerala, Goa, and elsewhere. A visiting scientist, from ESSO-National Centre of Antarctic and Ocean Research (NCAOR) supported his view and added that available estimates of species diversity greatly varied. The Chair cited this as an example showing that available information on marine habitats suffers from considerable uncertainties. He also pointed out that a huge data gap exists on assessment of corals, especially soft corals.

Theme 5: Capacity-building

16. The theme coordinator of capacity-building, at the outset, remarked that it is necessary to identify the States that may be lacking the capacity to conduct their own environmental and socioeconomic assessments of the marine environment (see annex IX). He suggested that the capacity-building activities need to concentrate on the following issues:

(a) Methodologies to obtain the information from various sources on a regular basis;

(b) Standardization of the information content for assessments at various levels;

(c) Developing common methodologies to carry out the assessment;

(d) Developing methodologies for scaling up national, subregional, regional and global assessments;

(e) Developing reporting forms to assist the integration process, with the aim of securing coherence, consistency and comparability as far as possible.

17. The immediate action plan recommended includes identification of the needs for capacity-building (including the acquisition of the necessary technology) for marine monitoring and assessment (including integrated assessments), and development of a short-term capacity-building plan to mobilize the information and knowledge that is known to exist but has not yet been systematically organized in a way that would allow its use for the Regular Process. The theme coordinator further stated that in India, 10 universities are currently offering a post-graduate degree programme, a PhD programme in oceanography/marine sciences. Further, he added that an International Training Centre for Operational Oceanography has been set up at the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services, Hyderabad. He also mentioned the various training programmes such as the integrated coastal zone management, applications of remote sensing and geographic information system (GIS) in coastal areas, satellite oceanography, sediment transport in near-shore areas, coastal vulnerability, ecotoxicology, shoreline management, marine pollution, coastal ecosystem modelling, oil-spill modelling and application of remote sensing in fisheries management, which are being conducted by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services at Hyderabad and the Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management Project Directorate at Chennai. The training provided by the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute in Marine Fishery Catch Assessment, census of marine fishers, crafts and gears, marine fish stock assessments, fisheries ecosystem assessments, environment and habitat assessments, marine biodiversity, fisheries management policies and socioeconomic assessments, which he also mentioned in this regard. He emphasized that opportunities and facilities for capacity-building at various levels exist in India. However, for the World Ocean

Assessment, it may be necessary to identify the gap areas, and make efforts in capacity-building for those areas. India can help other States in capacity-building at various levels.

Discussion and recommendations

18. The Senior Scientific Consultant from the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management suggested that training programmes should be aimed at identifying and filling gaps such as microbial assessment, seagrass mapping, and others. He suggested that satellite-based techniques can be used to identify mangroves, seagrasses, etc. He further stated that the National Centre is currently engaged in assessments through the programme on the ecosystem health report card.

19. The Scientist-F from the Ministry of Earth Sciences, who participated through a video bridge, proposed the development of a template/matrix for circulation to neighbouring countries in order to enhance cooperation among Member States of the region. The Chair of the workshop supported this view and proposed the formation of a core group for capacity-building, with the Director, ESSO-INCOIS, as the contact person, to develop a questionnaire, with inputs from convenors of all working groups. He further requested that a list of potential focal points for all countries in the region be prepared, since effective communication among these countries is extremely important. The Programme Officer, ESSO-INCOIS, agreed to be the nodal point for this operation. The Director, ESSO-INCOIS, stated that based on the response obtained in the questionnaire, training programmes can be organized on a regional basis.

20. The representative from Greenpeace India suggested including assessments on open ocean and activities related to shipping.

21. The Senior Scientific Consultant of the National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management suggested that South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme funding be made available for a technical assessment programme for the Indian Ocean. The Professor from the Indian Institute of Science added that training can be imparted to students through the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission/Scientific Committee for Oceanic Research programmes.

22. The representative from the Ministry of External Affairs, Qatar, stated that the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Regional Commission for Fisheries are interested in continuous monitoring of the environment using satellite technology. He agreed to identify the data gaps in the region. The representative from MRAG Ltd, United Kingdom (British Indian Ocean Territory) remarked that many oceanographic programmes from the region have not been covered. He called for international level capacity-building.

23. The Scientific Secretary, ESSO-Ministry of Earth Sciences and Adviser, ESSO-Ministry of Earth Sciences emphasized the importance of capacity-building in the region and said that cooperation among various countries in the region is very important for the success of the workshop. He also said that procedure, data collection, formatting and preparation of the report should be standardized for all the countries.

24. The Principal Scientist of the Centre for Marine Fisheries Institute suggested that training of data collectors is very important for uniform data collection.

25. The Chair of the workshop agreed with the comments of the participants and emphasized that improving communication among the countries of the region is the most important first step. He identified the need for greater involvement of regional organizations, undertaking joint research programmes and securing funds for capacity-building activities. He requested that the Director of ESSO-INCOIS publicize the training opportunities through the website. He suggested the end of the year 2014 as the deadline for generating data based on these exercises.

26. One member of the Group of Experts joined from Toronto through a video bridge and discussed issues related to capacity-building. He agreed to send reports of previous workshops pertaining to capacity-building. Another member of the Group of Experts also joined from the Philippines through a video bridge. She expressed her happiness over the vast information presented on marine biodiversity and said that it would be very helpful to the Group of Experts in drafting the chapters of the World Ocean Assessment. She suggested including information on marine protected areas and other important ecosystems such as the Pulicat Lake.

27. The three break-out groups, i.e., Group 1, biophysics and biogeochemistry; Group 2, biodiversity and food security; and Group 3, socioeconomics and capacity-building listed the assessments carried out in the specific areas against respective chapters in the template. After perusal of the template, the Chair of the workshop remarked that additional information needed to be added.

Conclusions

28. The participants agreed on the following action points:

(a) Recommendations of the workshop to be followed up proactively. Improve communication among various States in the region, also involving regional organizations;

(b) Interact with individuals from Member States through organization/ questionnaire;

(c) Promote the establishment of a coordination mechanism for the conduct of assessments in areas beyond national jurisdiction with the participation of the Indian Ocean Rim countries;

(d) The template with inventory of assessments to be sent to all participants and Member States of the region for updating;

(e) Data provided under various groups must be authenticated, especially, water quality data of the Coastal Ocean Monitoring and Protection System programme should be subjected to quality check;

(f) Summary of the report containing results and conclusion in accordance with the Guidelines (for workshops) to be submitted by the Ministry of Earth Sciences to the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea.

The Director, ESSO-NIOT and the Chair of the workshop thanked all the delegates, including the representative of the Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, for their active participation and declared the workshop closed.

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Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 147
Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Results of the revised survey to establish the standard rate of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261 on the report of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 67/261, the General Assembly approved the conclusions and recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group, as summarized in section IV of its report on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and related issues (A/C.5/67/10). Central to the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group was the use of a revised methodology to collect data from troop- and police-contributing countries on the common, additional and essential costs they incur when deploying uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

II. Background

2. The Senior Advisory Group was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/289 to consider rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and related issues. Its establishment came after six months of intense intergovernmental negotiations over the standard rate of reimbursement. In establishing the Senior Advisory Group, the Assembly recognized the importance of the rate of personnel reimbursement to the wider peacekeeping partnership and its centrality to peacekeeping budgets and finance. The General Assembly convened the Senior Advisory Group in recognition of the challenges it faced in putting in place an effective, transparent and equitable system for the regular review of the rate of personnel reimbursement to contributing countries.

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3. The recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group were concerned primarily with the reimbursement framework. In addition, in paragraphs 118 to 120 of its report, the Senior Advisory Group also made a number of recommendations related to peacekeeping policy that do not have direct budgetary implications. In keeping with the initial report of the Secretary-General on the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group (A/67/713), progress regarding the implementation of those recommendations will be reported to the General Assembly through the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.

III. The current reimbursement framework

4. The current personnel reimbursement system has three distinct elements: the standard rate for "pay and allowances" of $1,028 per month per person; a supplementary payment for "specialists" of $303 per month that is automatically applied to 25 per cent of personnel in a logistics unit and 10 per cent of personnel in an infantry battalion; an amount of $68 per month for each contingent member in respect of personal clothing, gear and equipment; and $5 monthly amount as a usage factor for personal weaponry. Since 2011, an annual supplementary ad hoc payment has been made to contributing countries. In 2011/12 and 2012/13, the supplementary payment was met from savings and efficiencies within the peacekeeping budgets. For the year 2013/14, the supplementary payment amounted to 6.75 per cent of the base rate of $1,028, or an additional $69 per person.

5. The total amount budgeted for personnel reimbursement for the year 2013/14, comprising all standard personnel reimbursements (pay and allowances, specialist supplement, personal kit and equipment, and weaponry, as well as the ad hoc and supplementary payment) totals $1.33 billion, with an average per person per month amount of approximately $1,210 paid per contingent personnel member.

6. In addition to the existing categories of reimbursement (allowances and personal kit and equipment, including weaponry), the revised survey methodology requested data on three new categories of troop- and police-contributing country expenditures: inland transportation, predeployment medical; and United Nations-specific predeployment training.

7. The General Assembly has also established additional direct payments to individual contingent troops and police: a daily allowance of $1.28 established in 1974; and $10.50 per day for 15 days for recreational leave, which was updated in 2009. These direct payments from the United Nations are not reimbursements to troop-contributing countries. In paragraph 99 of its report, the Senior Advisory Group noted that the daily allowance had not been revised for nearly 40 years and that the General Assembly may wish to revise the level of this allowance. Table 1 provides an overview of the current personnel reimbursement amounts.

Table 1
Standard reimbursement system

	Amount (United States dollars)	*Date of most recent adjustment*
Paid to troop-contributing countries (per month per person)		
Pay and allowances	1 028.00	2002
Supplementary pay for specialists	303.00	2002
Usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment	68.00	2002
Usage factor for personal weaponry	5.00	2002
Direct payments to individual contingent members (per day per contingent member)		
Daily allowance	1.28	1974
Recreational leave allowance (15 days)	10.50	2009

8. In paragraphs 14 and 15 of its report, the Senior Advisory Group highlighted the degree to which peacekeeping has evolved, pointing out that United Nations peacekeeping operations are more diverse than ever, and that their mandates were highly complex and covered a broad range of political, security and peacebuilding goals. The Senior Advisory Group also pointed out that this evolution had placed increased demands on the United Nations and its troop and police contributors, whereby the task of generating qualified personnel and sustaining, equipping and financing them was formidable. In its observations on the current system of personnel reimbursement, in paragraph 80 of its report, the Senior Advisory Group highlighted the following: the existing personnel reimbursement framework had not been significantly reviewed since 1974 and the separate payments it includes do not necessarily correspond with contemporary operational requirements; and the current framework does not distinguish between types of missions or the risk levels assumed by countries contributing forces to those missions, nor is it designed to ensure that United Nations operations have the right kinds of military expertise at their disposal. The Senior Advisory Group further observed that some of the individual elements did not achieve their purpose. The Senior Advisory Group also pointed out that the specialist supplement does not reimburse for specialties as such, but compensates countries for a fixed proportion of individuals of higher rank, and that the current separation of the two personal kit elements ($68 usage factor for personal clothing, gear and equipment and $5 for personal weaponry, as outlined in table 1) reflects the fragmented evolution of the reimbursement system.

9. At the core of the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group adopted by the General Assembly is the goal of establishing an effective, transparent and equitable system to regularly review the rate of personnel reimbursement to countries contributing uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping, and that this system should be based on actual data on the common, additional and essential costs incurred by countries contributing troops. The underlying principles for the system and the data collection exercise framework, re-articulated by the General Assembly in its adoption of the recommendations of the Senior Advisory

Group, are: simplicity, equity, transparency, comprehensiveness, portability, financial control and audit and confirmed delivery of specified services.

10. In this regard, according to the Senior Advisory Group, the report of the Secretariat on the survey data is a fundamental part of the new system approved by the General Assembly in resolution 67/261. The purpose of the survey data is to assist the Assembly in making an informed decision on the rate of reimbursement. The Secretary-General has not been requested to make a recommendation on the actual rate of reimbursement.

11. In approving the recommendation by the Senior Advisory Group to introduce two premium payments in addition to the standard rate of reimbursement, the General Assembly recognized that the reimbursement structure could also support changing operational circumstances. In particular, in approving payments for enabling capacities that necessarily require a combination of personnel and equipment, the resolution recognizes the operational link between equipment and personnel. The possible deductions to personnel reimbursement on the basis of absent or non-functioning major equipment also requires closer integration between the two systems. This fundamental operational relationship should be better integrated across the Secretariat's own systems for reimbursing troop- and police-contributing countries.

IV. Revised survey methodology

12. As noted by the Senior Advisory Group in its report, the United Nations has struggled to put in place a system to regularly collect, analyse and review the costs incurred by Member States in contributing contingent personnel. Previous survey attempts have encountered multiple problems, and no survey has been conducted and reported to the General Assembly since 1996 (see A/54/763). The survey process approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261 was designed to address the flaws noted in previous attempts, most recently the methodology approved by the General Assembly in 2009 in its resolution 63/285 (see A/60/725/Add.1). In adopting its resolution 67/261 approving the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group, the General Assembly replaced the survey process approved in 2009, which was never completed. In that it is a pared down and simplified version of the questionnaire approved in 2009, the new survey represents an evolution from the previous approach. The problems identified and the measures introduced to overcome them are summarized below:

(a) Low response rate: in paragraph 57 of its report, the Senior Advisory Group describes how, more than two years after the launch of the 2009 survey approved by the Assembly in its resolution 63/289, only 25 countries out of a total sample size of 84 had responded. In 2011, only 15 out of a total sample size of 73 submitted responses. The process approved by the Assembly in its resolution 67/261, and reported on in the present report, worked with a smaller and more targeted sample of 10 representative countries. The survey yielded a 100 per cent response rate;

(b) Incomplete data: questionnaires received as part of the previous survey were largely incomplete, with many responses containing no data in entire sections. The inconsistency of information made analysis and comparison very difficult and called into question the empirical validity of some of the data. In the process

described in the present report, all 10 questionnaires were complete in all sections, and those areas requiring clarification and verification were addressed through the interactive follow-up process;

(c) Relevance and complexity: the previous survey requested information about regular military pay, which is not an additional cost related to United Nations peacekeeping. It also did not solicit any cost data about training, which is an essential and additional operational investment made by contributing countries. At over 60 pages in length, the questionnaire also requested a great deal of highly technical information, and feedback from contributing countries indicated that it was very hard to understand. The revised survey applied the principle of simplicity in reducing the level of detail required in the questionnaire and gave the opportunity for clarification and review through the follow-up dialogue between the sample countries and the Secretariat;

(d) Timeframe: the previous survey, approved by the Assembly in its resolution 63/285, aimed to establish a baseline over a four-year period. The length of this survey process and the delay in reporting results contributed to the frustration expressed by troop- and police-contributing countries to the 2011 Working Group (see A/C.5/65/16, paras. 33-38) on contingent-owned equipment and the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/65/SR.33). The revised survey process lasted six months from the selection of the sample countries to the presentation of data;

(e) Feedback: the Senior Advisory Group observed that the previous survey process, as approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 63/289, did not provide any proactive assistance to troop- and police-contributing countries in completing the questionnaire and that it lacked a human element to assist responding countries in putting together meaningful information. In the current survey, each sample country was assigned a focal point, and regular briefings were held with the sample countries. Visits to the sample countries were a key part of the survey methodology. The process of working closely with the sample countries has resulted in the provision of data that is clearer and more consistent, as well as an improved understanding between the sample countries and the Secretariat about the reimbursement framework.

Sample

13. As approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261, the sample of 10 countries was drawn from the top 20 contributors over the prior three-year period (2010-2012); included, in proportion to overall troop contributions, countries from four broad income categories (high, upper middle, lower middle and low, based on World Bank data and classification); together comprised a collective minimum of 50 per cent of troop and police contributions over the prior three-year period; and were willing to provide the required data with the assistance of the survey team.

14. In establishing the sample, interest was solicited from the 20 eligible Member States. A process of briefings and meetings was undertaken to establish the final 10 countries to participate in the process. Seven of the 10 countries contribute formed police units as well as military contingents. In accordance with the approved recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group, the final list was communicated to the President of the General Assembly by the Secretary-General in a letter dated 25 October 2013.

Table 2
Sample countries participating in the personnel cost survey 2013/14

Country	*Percentage contribution 2010-2012*	*Income category*
Bangladesh	11.05	Low
Pakistan	10.91	Lower middle
India	9.28	Lower middle
Nigeria	6.04	Lower middle
Egypt	5.14	Lower middle
Nepal	4.50	Low
Rwanda	4.09	Low
Uruguay	2.60	Upper middle
Brazil	2.42	Upper middle
Italy	1.79	High
Total	**57.82**	

Data

15. As mandated by the approval of the General Assembly of the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group, data was collected about five categories of common, additional and essential costs incurred by countries in deploying to peacekeeping: (a) allowances; (b) personal kit and equipment (including personal weaponry); (c) predeployment medical expenses; (d) inland transportation; and (e) United Nations-specific predeployment training. Sample countries were also asked to report on any other costs. The data presented in table 3 includes only those mandated categories.

16. The data was collected for an identical time period to allow for comparability. Costs were requested in the currency in which they were incurred, and the United Nations operational rate of exchange was applied. The questionnaire requested information based on troop and police deployment for March 2013. This approach provided a "snapshot" of deployment costs for a set period in the previous financial year, allowing sample countries to report on actual expenses incurred at a specific point in time. March 2013 was selected because it was within the most recent financial year, and yet a sufficient period of time in the past to allow sample countries to provide actual costs based on prior expenditure.

17. The questionnaire requested separate data about the costs associated with deployment of formed police units. The first United Nations formed police unit was deployed in 2001. Since the current base rate was established in 2002 through an ad hoc increase approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/274, formed police unit costs have never been included in cost data surveys. The presentation of the data in the present report includes costs for formed police units in the overall aggregate amounts. In March 2013, the total deployment of formed police units was 12,936, as compared with 82,395 for contingent military personnel. The data collected as part of the process reported in the present document also includes information on the amount and number of overseas allowances and other costs paid

to senior officers, for both military and police. These costs are incorporated into the average per person monthly costs for each category.

Method

18. In its resolution 67/261, the General Assembly approved a revised approach to data collection that would link the data-collection process more closely with analysis. Following this methodology, the data presented in the present report was generated through a pared down and simplified questionnaire that was based on the questionnaire previously approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/289, followed by a more focused set of questions to allow a more meaningful and analytical review.

19. Central to the interactive approach were follow-up visits to participating countries. Between November 2013 and February 2014, Secretariat-led teams comprising the required military, police and budgetary expertise visited all 10 countries. The visits were an essential part of the methodology, allowing for the review and revision, as needed, of the data requested in the questionnaire and to ensure full understanding of the costs presented. After the completion of this interactive process, the most senior financial official of the ministry of defence or interior signed off on the revised questionnaire.

20. Following the finalization of all 10 questionnaires, the data was reviewed to ensure completeness and comprehensiveness to ensure that all relevant information provided by the sample countries was properly understood. In analysing the information, the primary consideration was to ensure that the costs captured were specific to peacekeeping and directly applicable to the deployment of personnel from the sample countries. The data was analysed in terms of the actual costs incurred by the sample countries in relation to the survey period. Although the data, in particular those on allowances, clearly indicate a relationship between the current rate of reimbursement and the costs incurred by troop-contributing countries, the survey was not designed to assess how the current reimbursement amounts are being used.

21. Throughout the survey process, the overarching principle of "common, additional and essential", identified by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/274 and reiterated in resolution 67/261, was applied to determine costs associated specifically with contributions to United Nations peacekeeping.

22. A Technical Expert Reference Panel of five experts with a range of financial, military and police experience worked with the Secretariat to advise on the process and to ensure that the methodology was followed and that the data was, as far as possible, complete, consistent and credible and in accordance with the instructions. The Panel also discussed in detail with the Secretariat survey teams the results obtained, particularly in areas with high variances. On the basis of its detailed review of the process, the Panel confirmed that the methodology had been consistently applied and that the data collection and analysis process was sound. In their considerations, where relevant and applicable, the Panel also reviewed the data against other sources of information, including open source data and United Nations-specific information, for example, the medical services manual and the United Nations core predeployment training modules. In its view, the data presented is credible and clear. In addition, it noted that the revised methodology had led to clearer data and an improved response rate.

A. Presentation of cost data

23. In paragraphs 71 and 72 of its report, the Senior Advisory Group stated that the data collected from each of the sample countries would be collated and that the aggregated costs would be presented by category (i.e., allowances, personal kit and equipment, predeployment medical expenses, in-country travel and training) for each country. The overall monthly cost for each sample country would also be presented, and this approach would allow the General Assembly to get a full picture of the costs in each of the representative countries rather than an average or median cost figure.

24. Noting the legitimate concerns of participating countries about the confidentiality and sensitivity of the data, the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group stressed that individual countries should not be identified in the presentation of the data. In accordance with this approach, the data presented in the present report is anonymous. In the tables below, the sample countries are designated by letters A through J. Those designations are used consistently throughout the report (country A is always country A). Throughout the process, all information given by the sample countries was handled with complete confidentiality, with only the core Secretariat survey team seeing all the attributed data.

Sample weighting issues

25. As outlined in paragraph 21 above, the sampling parameters addressed problems with previous surveys, notably the low rate of response and the lack of completeness and consistency in the data submitted. The sample countries participated voluntarily, and the sampling methodology allowed for participation from the different income categories to reflect the different nature and cost structures of the universe of troop-contributing countries. The sample represents more than 50 per cent of contributions from the three previous years and is broadly representative of the types of countries contributing to peacekeeping. However, because it is self-selecting and not random, it may not, strictly speaking, be statistically representative. It does, however, meet the mandated requirements laid down by the General Assembly in its acceptance of the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group.

26. The Senior Advisory Group recommended that the presentation of data be collated and the aggregated costs presented by category for each country and that the overall monthly cost for each sample country also be presented so that the General Assembly would get a full picture of the costs in each of the representative countries. The survey data is presented as such in table 3. Each of the 10 countries represents a different percentage of contribution to United Nations peacekeeping and to the overall sample itself. A simple average across the 10 sample countries would exaggerate the total costs incurred by the sample countries. Accordingly, paragraphs 28, 34, 40, 50, 55 and 59 below also give weighted cost data. The weighting reflects the percentage contribution of each of the 10 countries as a proportion of the overall sample population. The weighted average across all five cost categories, which reflects the proportionate size of the contributions of troop contributors, would amount to $1,762.55 per person per month.

27. Tables 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 present only the aggregated costs from each sample country and by category: peacekeeping-specific allowances; personal kit and equipment (including weaponry); predeployment medical expenses, inland transportation, and peacekeeping-specific training.

Table 3
Summary of the 10 countries and five categories of data

	Average per person monthly amount (United States dollars) by category									
Sample country	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*	*E*	*F*	*G*	*H*	*I*	*J*
Allowances	1 075.26	7 820.61	1 108.08	1 827.63	1 119.47	1 439.29	1 083.93	2 280.80	1 207.73	989.41
Personal kit and equipment	236.79	61.83	200.68	259.23	113.11	123.82	197.21	131.17	199.97	136.57
Predeployment medical	59.82	89.41	68.88	78.28	63.43	60.27	37.15	58.45	43.80	54.80
Inland transportation	0.29	1.06	24.70	100.05	13.96	9.34	5.87	24.60	12.53	21.48
United Nations-specific predeployment training	101.17	244.16	138.21	162.41	151.35	87.27	275.86	169.68	156.87	101.39
Total (per person per month)	**1 473.33**	**8 217.07**	**1 540.56**	**2 427.61**	**1 461.32**	**1 719.99**	**1 600.01**	**2 664.70**	**1 620.91**	**1 303.65**

28. As noted in paragraph 6 above, three of the categories presented above are additions to the reimbursement framework (inland transportation, predeployment medical and United Nations-specific predeployment training). These newly captured costs represent 13 per cent of the total weighted average figure of $1,762.55. Without these additional categories, the weighted average monthly cost per person would amount to $1,536.23.

29. As highlighted by the Senior Advisory Group in paragraph 14 of its report, peacekeeping has changed significantly since the last survey of cost data. Not only have the mandated tasks grown more complex but the mission environments are, in many cases, more hostile with increased health risks. In response to those changes, over the past two decades the United Nations has placed increasing demands on troop- and police-contributing countries through, inter alia, more rigorous standards for predeployment medical clearance and an increased focus on training. The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, in its report on its 2012 substantive session, reiterated the importance of training and providing peacekeeping personnel with adequate equipment to fulfil the mandate in accordance with United Nations standards as key factors in preventing casualties and in ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers. In the same report, the Special Committee also highlighted the importance of establishing medical standards. In consultation with troop- and police-contributing countries, the Secretariat is finalizing a revised medical support manual that includes enhanced predeployment requirements. The previous medical support manual was issued in 1999. The addition of these categories in the revised questionnaire reflects the expectations of the United Nations from troop- and police-contributing countries.

30. In line with the approved methodology and on the basis of the recommendation to maintain a standard per-person rate, the data was collated and aggregated to establish average monthly per-person per month costs over the course of the deployment length for each category and overall. The data, in each category, is weighted to reflect the actual number and type of deployed personnel so, for example, any higher allowances paid to senior officers, are aggregated to reflect the total number of officers at that rank. However, for at least two of the cost categories, the costs are not incurred on a monthly basis. In the case of training costs, the

investment in planning, developing and providing predeployment preparation for United Nations peacekeeping can be a permanent activity that requires significant capital expenditure and ongoing running costs. Table 4 gives the one-time costs of United Nations-specific predeployment training, as an illustration of one of the up-front investments made by contributing countries.

Table 4
One-time costs for United Nations-specific predeployment training

Sample country	*Total cost of training per deployment (United States dollars)*
A	3 690 401
B	1 583 595
C	6 889 534
D	2 084 353
E	14 460 576
F	1 486 925
G	14 654 687
H	4 988 683
I	4 378 238
J	10 323 524

Cost data: general observations

31. Since the inception of the personnel reimbursement framework, the wide variations in troop costs among troop-contributing countries has been recognized. It has also been recognized that, in some cases, the standard rates would not fully compensate troop-contributing countries for all of the costs they incurred (A/9825/Add.2, para. 15). Countries contributing troops and police to United Nations peacekeeping operations do so voluntarily and, throughout the survey process, the sample countries demonstrated their commitment to United Nations peacekeeping and reported a range of positive benefits associated with their participation in United Nations operations.

32. In reviewing the cost data, it is also important to consider the different history of contributions to peacekeeping among sample countries as well as the varied national systems and approaches to generating and sustaining troops and police. In some of the sample countries, the process of generating troops is organic, with existing units being trained and prepared for peacekeeping deployment. In others, the process generates composite units, with considerable time spent on bringing together personnel from different units, or even service branches. In the case of police, the units do not, in most cases, exist organically and are brought together specifically for service in United Nations peacekeeping, requiring considerably longer predeployment lead times and preparation. The range and variety of national systems and approaches is reflected in the different costs reported.

33. The General Assembly approved five categories of costs identified as common, additional and essential. Investment by the sample countries in those categories is not always easy to isolate from general military/police expenses. Inevitably costs were incurred that, while they were spent in relation to peacekeeping, also benefit

more general military or police deployment. In some cases, overlaps exist between and among the cost categories; for example, with kit and equipment being specifically issued for training periods or travel related to training. Throughout the survey process, the Secretariat teams worked with the sample countries to isolate, as far as possible, specific costs. To this end, various peripheral and overhead costs have not been reflected in the data presented, for example ongoing backstopping support costs, such as translation of materials.

Cost data: allowances

Table 5
Allowances

Sample country	*Allowances per person monthly amount (United States dollars)*
A	1 075.26
B	7 820.61
C	1 108.08
D	1 827.63
E	1 119.47
F	1 439.29
G	1 083.93
H	2 280.80
I	1 207.73
J	989.41

34. Table 5 provides an overall average amount per person per month in each sample country for allowances paid to personnel specific to their service in United Nations peacekeeping by each sample country. Costs associated with regular domestic pay and allowances were not included. Of note, the cost of allowances comprises over three quarters of the overall costs incurred by contributing countries. **The weighted average costs across all 10 sample countries would amount to $1,367.89 per person per month. Allowances constitute 77.61 per cent of the total costs incurred across the 10 sample troop- and police-contributing countries.**

35. In keeping with the approved methodology, table 5 includes data on the amount and type of overseas allowances and other costs paid to senior officers. The questionnaire requested detailed information about any allowances paid to specialized personnel, such as aviation, naval or engineering, and for any allowance specific to senior ranks. Specific information was also requested about the allowances paid to formed police units, including any specialist allowances.

36. Some variation exists in the type of and approach to determining additional allowances paid for service in United Nations peacekeeping. Many countries reported a flat rate allowance, linked to the current reimbursement rate. The majority of the sample countries set their allowances in relation to the standard United Nations rate, with a form of "pass-through" payment to contingents to the standard monthly base rate of $1,028. In addition, some countries also pay a one-off

deployment allowance or an additional incentive for specialties in high demand, such as medical skills. Although outside of the timeframe of the data collection, one country also reported that it had recently introduced an additional allowance for women police officers, to encourage greater participation.

37. In the more detailed discussion with sample countries about the rate of allowances, a number of factors would seem to influence the payment of allowances. One is the standard rate of United Nations reimbursement itself (since the current base rate was established in 2002 and is well known to participating personnel). Another factor, in some cases, is national legislation that determines the amount and type of allowance that uniformed personnel must be paid when on overseas service. In general, allowances increase with seniority, but in some sample countries the allowance structure is relatively flat.

Cost data: personal kit and equipment

Table 6
Personal kit and equipment

Sample country	*Personal kit, equipment and weaponry, per person monthly amount (United States dollars)*
A	236.79
B	61.83
C	200.68
D	259.23
E	113.11
F	123.82
G	197.21
H	131.17
I	199.97
J	136.57

38. Table 6 gives an average monthly amount per person for the costs incurred in providing individual contingents with personal kit and equipment, including a personal weapon. The monthly cost represents the total average amount per person amortized over the deployment period. Again, the different national systems in place have an impact on the cost structure of kitting and equipping personnel.

39. The questionnaire provided the standard list of personal kit and equipment specified in annex II of the Contingent-owned Equipment Manual. Sample countries were asked to give an average cost per person. Details were also requested of any additional costs incurred in equipping female contingents or police officers. In the follow-up questions and survey visits, more detail was requested on how the costs were established, including the application of depreciation as well as the national systems and processes in place to equip soldiers and/or police. The majority of sample countries issue an entirely new set of items on deployment with the United Nations. While noting some overlap between regular service items and kit, in most cases sample countries issue new personal kit and personal equipment items (such as sleeping bags or water canteens) to contingents being deployed to United Nations

peacekeeping. In some cases, technical specialists were issued with more specialized kits, with increased costs.

40. While the list annexed to the memorandum of understanding is standard, table 6 reflects the quite significant variations in costs among the sample countries. A number of factors need to be considered, including different national production capacities and procurement systems. In most sample countries, the costs of standard items are established through a central process that reflects market surveys and tendering based on both price and quality. **The weighted average cost across all 10 countries for this category would amount to $168.33 (9.55 per cent of the overall cost across the sample countries) per person per month.**

Cost data: predeployment medical

Table 7
Predeployment medical

Sample country	*Predeployment medical, per person monthly amount (United States dollars)*
A	59.82
B	89.41
C	68.88
D	78.28
E	63.43
F	60.27
G	37.15
H	58.45
I	43.80
J	54.80

41. Table 7 gives an average monthly amount per person for costs incurred in providing predeployment medical examinations, tests and vaccinations. The monthly cost represents the total average amount per person amortized over the deployment period (either 6, 9 or 12 months). Many sample countries have in place extensive processes and systems to manage the predeployment medical requirements of a large number of personnel deployed to peacekeeping, which require additional administrative investments and overheads. **The weighted average across all 10 countries for this category would amount to $58.87 (3.34 per cent of the overall cost across the sample countries) per person per month.**

42. The questionnaire provided a list of standard examinations, tests and X-rays based on the standard United Nations medical services form. As these standards are considered mandatory for deployment to United Nations peacekeeping, these medical costs are common, additional and essential to United Nations peacekeeping. A number of sample countries also provided the costs of additional exams or tests, including predeployment psychological evaluations, not included in the medical manual. Since it is of direct benefit to the United Nations for troops and police to be in good health, these costs were included in the overall amounts. It should also be noted that the United Nations directly reimburses contributing countries for yellow

fever and Japanese encephalitis through separate arrangements under reimbursement for contingent-owned equipment. The General Assembly may wish to consider moving those costs into the personnel framework.

43. While the questionnaire explicitly asked for costs associated with predeployment medical requirements, sample countries also observed that they incurred costs associated with medical examinations and procedures post-deployment that were specific to service in United Nations peacekeeping operations, including psychological examinations and counselling. The General Assembly may wish to consider including peacekeeping-specific, post-deployment medical expenses in future survey exercises.

Cost data: inland transportation

Table 8
Inland transportation

Sample country	*Inland transportation (United States dollars)*
A	0.29
B	1.06
C	24.70
D	100.05
E	13.96
F	9.34
G	5.87
H	24.60
I	12.53
J	21.48

44. Table 8 provides an average monthly amount per person for costs incurred in moving a contingent, once ready to deploy, to the point of disembarkation to the United Nations peacekeeping operation. The monthly cost represents the total average amount per person amortized over the deployment period. In line with the methodology to use an identical time period (or "snapshot"), the costs presented are specifically in relation to the transportation costs of moving those troops and police in missions in March 2013.

45. In providing their data, a number of countries also gave information about the cost of travel related to bringing contingents/police for United Nations-specific training. These costs were disaggregated and added to the training costs. In the follow-up process, the survey teams requested additional information regarding the basis of calculations to arrive at the average cost per person.

46. Table 8 provides a range of costs associated with inland transportation that reflects the considerable diversity within the sample countries in terms of size, terrain and infrastructure, as well as the different national systems in place for generating troops and police. The United Nations requirement for one point of embarkation also had an impact in terms of requiring inland movement of personnel, both in terms of mobilization and demobilization of personnel. The questionnaire

requested information on only the mobilization costs of deployment and not demobilization. **The weighted average costs across all 10 countries for this category would amount to $19.15 (1.09 per cent of the overall cost across the sample countries) per person per month.**

Cost data: United Nations peacekeeping-specific training

Table 9
United Nations-specific predeployment training

Sample country	*United Nations-specific predeployment training (United States dollars)*
A	101.17
B	244.16
C	138.21
D	162.41
E	151.35
F	87.27
G	275.86
H	169.68
I	156.87
J	101.39

47. Over the past four years, the United Nations has made considerable efforts, in cooperation with troop- and police-contributing countries and other Member States, to strengthen and standardize its training requirements. In approving the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group, the General Assembly endorsed that immediate and enhanced priority be given to predeployment training for troops and police being sent to peacekeeping operations and that systems should be put in place to ensure effective monitoring of predeployment training.

48. Noting the difficulties involved in establishing a standard cost methodology for training across diverse systems and contexts, the questionnaire asked for details of all the United Nations peacekeeping-specific training provided to personnel before deploying and the costs involved according to general categories related to: instructors; materials; specialized equipment; facilities; and any other costs.

49. While a mandatory curriculum and standardized predeployment training programme, including for the assessment of personnel, are in place for formed police units, the situation regarding peacekeeping training for the military is more diverse. The United Nations core predeployment training modules provide a basic set of materials for United Nations peacekeeping and are widely used by Member States. In addition, the United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual offers additional guidance on the core skills and training that infantry personnel serving in United Nations peacekeeping are required to have. In addition, many troop-contributing countries develop their own curricula, including mission-specific simulations and exercises related to their own needs and based on the operational requirements of the mandate.

50. Since sample countries have their own national systems and requirements as well as differing histories and experiences of United Nations peacekeeping and they apply a variety of approaches to costing training, it has been a challenge to establish common and comparable costs in this category. The cost data in table 9 represents an average cost per person calculated by dividing the total costs provided by the sample country for the training given to the units deployed in March 2013 by the overall deployment strength, and then dividing that figure by the length of rotation. **The weighted average cost reflecting the proportionate size of the troop-contributing country contributions would amount to $148.30 (8.41 per cent of the overall cost across the sample countries) per person per month.**

51. This is the first time a troop cost survey has attempted to capture training costs at this level of detail. While the data raises some issues about comparability and standardization in collecting more information about the range and diversity of what is offered by troop- and police-contributing countries, the inclusion of training within the reimbursement framework represents an opportunity to understand better the kinds of costs incurred by contributing countries in providing United Nations predeployment training and the different approaches they take.

Cost data: other costs

52. In addition to the five mandated categories, the questionnaire requested information about any other costs. A range of different expenses were reported. In most cases, the expenditure was unique to one country and, therefore, could not be considered "common"; for example, "contingent allowances" paid to unit commanders for covering miscellaneous costs. Some reported costs related to the spouses and dependants of contingent members; neither of those costs could be considered essential to United Nations peacekeeping. Sample countries also observed that they incur post-deployment expenses, including inland demobilization costs and post-deployment medical exams.

53. These other costs are reported as significant troop- and police-contributing country investments, in line with their own national systems and commitments to the United Nations. The General Assembly may wish to consider adjusting the cost categories collected in future surveys. One additional cost reported by 9 out of the 10 sample countries was the cost of issuing passports. The General Assembly may wish to consider including this cost in future surveys.

B. Women in peacekeeping: additional factors relating to female contingents

54. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security is integrated into all United Nations peacekeeping mandates. Among other aspects, that resolution and subsequent Security Council resolutions call on Member States to ensure women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and urges all actors to increase the participation of women. The benefits of enhanced visibility of women in peace and security processes include creating enabling conditions for women's participation during all stages of peace processes and for countering negative societal attitudes regarding full and equal participation of women in conflict resolution and mediation.

55. The increased deployment of women peacekeepers is critical for, among other things: addressing the specific needs of female ex-combatants during the process of

demobilization and reintegration into civilian life; helping make the peacekeeping force approachable to women in the community; and broadening the skill set available within a peacekeeping mission.

56. The number of women uniformed peacekeepers has increased over the past four years, up from 2,939 women in January 2010 to 3,801 in January 2014. In March 2013, there were 3,552 female uniformed personnel deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Women peacekeepers have different needs and requirements in terms of their personal kit and equipment and other aspects of deployment, including the need for dedicated accommodation and other facilities. To that end, the questionnaire requested specific information on costs associated with deploying female peacekeepers. Further description and context was also provided in the follow-up visits.

57. The following list indicates some of the specific costs, in each category, related to female deployment:

(a) Allowances: one sample country reported an additional allowance paid to female police as an incentive for deployment. Another country reported an additional travel allowance for female contingents to make it easier for them to maintain contact with their children;

(b) Personal kit and equipment: a number of sample countries reported on specific items of clothing provided to female contingents and police officers, such as specific regulation coats and shoes;

(c) Predeployment medical: countries providing female contingent members and police reported additional costs related to administering pregnancy tests and gynaecological exams;

(d) Training: specific accommodation and facilities costs were provided for training women, including separate accommodation and ablution facilities.

V. Additional elements

58. In its resolution 67/261, the General Assembly approved two additional premium payments that could potentially be paid to troop- and police-contributing countries. In his report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group on rates of reimbursement to troop-contributing countries and other related issues (A/67/713, paras. 32-51), the Secretary-General gave an overview of how those payments would be administered from July 2014. The amount that could be paid for each premium is limited by a ceiling established as a percentage of the overall amount budgeted for personnel reimbursement within a financial year. In the case of the "risk" premium, this ceiling is no greater than an amount equal to a 10 per cent premium paid to 10 per cent of the average number of contingent personnel deployed during the peacekeeping fiscal year (A/C.5/67/10, para. 112). Based on the current standard rate of reimbursement, this amount is approximately $13.3 million per year. In the case of enabling capacity, the ceiling is no greater than an amount equal to a 15 per cent premium paid to 20 per cent of the average number of contingent personnel deployed during the peacekeeping fiscal year, which would amount to approximately $40 million, based on current rates. This report updates and gives more detail on how the premiums will be implemented from 1 July 2014.

A. Premium for units operating without restrictions and caveats acquitting themselves well despite exceptional levels of risk ("risk" premium)

59. By its resolution 67/261, the General Assembly approved the recommendation of the Senior Advisory Group that the Secretary-General be authorized to award bonuses to individual units that are operating without restrictions and caveats imposed by troop- and police-contributing countries and that have acquitted themselves well despite exceptional levels of risk, that those awards would be paid at the conclusion of service directly to the relevant individual contingent members, and that the Secretary-General would decide on the awards on a quarterly basis.

60. The premiums will be awarded in line with the processes described in the Secretary-General's report (A/67/713, paras. 32-51). Recommendations to award the premium for risk will be based on quantitative and qualitative evidence drawn from existing sources of information and verified against contemporaneous reporting, such as situation reports and flash reports. Detailed operational factors to assess how and if those criteria apply will be shared with all field missions, supported by examples and definitions, for example of circumstances whereby a unit "acquits itself well". As stipulated in the recommendations of the Senior Advisory Group, to be eligible to receive this premium, units may not have restrictions and caveats placed on their operations by the contributing country. In making a recommendation for the premium, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General would need to include documented evidence that units are operating without restrictions or caveats.

61. The recommendation would be made at the unit level, and each member of the unit would be eligible for the financial bonus. The award of 10 per cent of the monthly reimbursement rate will be paid in respect of all actions taken within a calendar month. Given the exceptional nature of the award and the limited funds available, there would be no expectation that awards would be approved every quarter. In addition, the Secretary-General will award each member of the unit a non-monetary recognition through a special clasp to be affixed to the ribbon of the United Nations medal, and a letter of commendation from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

62. The Office for the Strategic Peacekeeping Partnership will annually review the functioning, impact and application of the premium and make recommendations to the Under-Secretaries-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support to strengthen and enhance the overall process, as might be required.

63. Once awarded, the calculation of the amount of the premium to be paid would be made by the Field Budget and Finance Division and reviewed by the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts to ensure that there are sufficient funds, within the established ceiling. Since the payment would in most cases be made at the mission level, disbursement of funds would be through the Director of Mission Support as part of the formal check-out process, using the existing mechanisms to disburse funds to individual uniformed personnel. In situations where the approval for the awarding of the premium for risk is granted following repatriation, United Nations Headquarters will make arrangements to pay the award through the Permanent Mission of the relevant troop- or police-contributing country. The implementation of this premium payment as part of the new reimbursement framework requires revised systems and processes so as to ensure consistency between operational and financial information and to ensure proper review and oversight of payment of the premium.

B. Premium for limited number of key enabling capacities

64. The General Assembly, by its resolution 67/261, approved the recommendation of the Senior Advisory Group that a premium be paid for the provision of a limited number of key enabling capabilities that are in high demand and short supply, and that the Secretary-General would decide from time to time and mission by mission which enabling capacities, if any, would qualify and the size of the premium in each case (see A/C.5/67/10, para. 114). According to the Senior Advisory Group, the annual aggregate amount of such premiums would be no greater than an amount equal to a 15 per cent premium paid to 20 per cent of the average number of contingent personnel deployed during the peacekeeping fiscal year.

65. The broad objective of this premium payment is to provide an additional incentive to contributing countries to address critical military and police gaps in United Nations peacekeeping operations. While the amount of the premium is linked to the level of personnel reimbursement, the critical gaps and capabilities required in United Nations missions necessarily involve both personnel and equipment, since in order to meet operational demands, one cannot operate without the other. Gaps identified by the Senior Advisory Group in the report included aviation units and level II and III hospitals. In addition, in paragraph 87 of its report, the Senior Advisory Group highlighted that securing the early provision of enablers at the outset of a mission is critical in developing early capability and allows for quicker deployment of all other components. Ongoing mission reviews of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support support the conclusion that the main operational gap is the absence of enough enablers at mission start up or surge in order to allow for fast deployment. Experience over the past 12 months, in particular in starting a new mission in Mali and, most recently, in moving contingents and formed police units to South Sudan also suggests that inter-mission cooperation is an area of potential capacity gaps where a premium might be helpful to deployment, where troop- and police-contributing countries are asked to move contingents between missions at short notice and with minimal constraints. The premium for enabling capacity will be awarded for those pre-identified capabilities that can rapidly deploy.

66. The amount of the premium to be paid for enabling capacity to the contributing country would be determined on the basis of how fast the capability can be provided starting from the date of United Nations acceptance of the contribution. Troop- and police-contributing countries will be awarded an incremental premium of 25, 15 and 10 per cent of the total annual reimbursement rate — both personnel and equipment — for, respectively, the 30-, 60-, 90-day deployment of the unit concerned. The premium will be paid as a lump sum as part of the personnel reimbursement, after the first quarter of deployment and calculated on the basis of a one-year maximum of the actually paid reimbursement rate for contingent-owned equipment and contingent personnel for a standard unit of the same type. The annual ceiling for the premium is tied to the overall annual personnel reimbursement. Based on the current standard rate of reimbursement this ceiling would amount to approximately $40 million. In order to provide a meaningful incentive for the rapid deployment of enabling capacities, the calculation of the amount of the premium would be based on both the personnel and equipment reimbursement for the unit concerned. As an indication, the approximate annual reimbursement for a standard engineering unit is $27.9 million ($13.34 million for personnel and $14.54 million for equipment). A 25 per cent premium for the deployment of the unit within

30 days would amount to $6.9 million. The premium would be disbursed as a one-time payment through the personnel reimbursement system.

67. The actual amount of the premium would be validated through the mission verification reports that will confirm the arrival of personnel and contingent-owned equipment to the mission area, and the actual delivery of the intended capability. Prevailing mechanisms and procedures for reimbursement would be followed for the one-year premium or will be prorated in cases where the actual deployment is less than one year.

68. Regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms will ensure fairness, equity and transparency in awarding the premiums to troop- and police-contributing countries. The implementation of this new process — closely linking force generation and logistics to operational decision-making and finance — will demand considerable new work. In developing the processes for implementing this premium, regular coordination and communication mechanisms have been established and will need to be enhanced from 1 July 2014.

69. The impact of the premium on the operational effectiveness and the force generation process would be reviewed annually, including if so requested, by the Office for the Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership.

C. Funding of the premiums

70. The premiums are new payments approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/261. As such, dedicated funding would be needed to pay the premiums, if awarded. It is proposed that funding for the awarding of the premium for risk and the premium for key enablers come from the establishment of a centrally managed fund. This fund would need to have an established level of $53.4 million, at the current standard rate of personnel reimbursement (total of premium for risk and premium for enabling capacity) or the equivalent percentages of any revised personnel reimbursement rate.

71. A dedicated fund would allow more transparency and oversight of the payment of the premiums. A financial performance report would be provided annually to the General Assembly in the context of the report on the overview of the financing of peacekeeping operations. Taking into account the concerns of Member States regarding new assessments, this mechanism would allow for the funding of the premiums while minimizing new assessments on Member States by allowing the use of unencumbered balances and other income and adjustments of peacekeeping operations.

72. Should the General Assembly so approve, the fund would be established, by 30 June 2014, and would be available in the fiscal year 2014/15. For the initial establishment of the fund in 2014/15, unencumbered balances would be applied. In the following year, the fund would be replenished, as necessary and, where possible, through unencumbered balances and other income and adjustments of the missions. The fund would be replenished at the end of each financial year, in line with the standard rate of reimbursement, to ensure that the maximum aggregate amounts approved by the General Assembly were maintained and available for the Secretary-General to award the premiums in each financial year. Appropriate accounting procedures will ensure that the funds are effectively managed throughout the

12-month financial period within the approved financial ceiling of the respective fiscal year.

D. Deduction to personnel reimbursement in relation to absent or non-functioning major equipment

73. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/261, approved proportional deductions to personnel reimbursement in respect of absent or non-functioning major equipment. The resolution put in place a number of parameters for applying this deduction. The application of the resolution has been implemented in line with the specific provisions of the resolution, specifically:

(a) No deduction will be applied until after two consecutive unsatisfactory quarterly contingent-owned equipment verification reports, and in any case, not before 31 October 2013, in order to provide contributing countries with sufficient opportunity to address shortfalls;

(b) No deduction will be made for major equipment that is absent or non-functional for reasons deemed by the Secretariat to be beyond the control of the troop- or police-contributing country;

(c) No deduction will be made related to absent or non-functional vehicles unless over 10 per cent of the vehicles specified in relevant memorandums of understanding are absent or non-functional;

(d) Deduction on account of absent or non-functional contingent-owned equipment shall not exceed 35 per cent of reimbursements for any unit in any case.

74. In implementing the resolution, troop- and police-contributing countries were given two full, consecutive quarterly verification periods to address shortfalls (June-September and October-December 2013). The first deductions will be applied in cases where there continue to be shortfalls between the operational requirements of the line item specified in the memorandum of understanding and that of the quarterly verification report in the period January to March 2014. In those cases, a deduction will be made to the personnel reimbursement for the unit concerned. To ensure consistency in application and uniformity in performance reporting by peacekeeping missions, for a line item of major equipment to be declared "unsatisfactory", the equipment as specified in the memorandum of understanding would have been absent or non-functional for at least 10 per cent of the time in a three-month quarterly reporting period. A line item accounts for all individual items of the same type of category, for example a Jeep (4 x 4) with military radio, rather than an individual piece of equipment. The totality of the equipment within the line item would need to be judged "unsatisfactory" for two consecutive quarters before any deduction to personnel reimbursement would apply. This 10 per cent threshold was decided by the General Assembly in relation to vehicles. The rationale for the 10 per cent threshold is that the presence and functionality of a line item that falls below 90 per cent has a significant negative impact on operations; i.e., the military/police functions cannot be satisfactorily performed without additional cost to the United Nations (either financially and/or through diminished ability to perform some mandated tasks). The 10 per cent threshold provided by the General Assembly in relation to vehicles has therefore provided a benchmark to define performance for other categories of major equipment.

75. In addition, equipment that was absent or non-functional for reasons beyond the control of the contributing country will not be taken into account when calculating any deductions to personnel reimbursement. Guidelines for field missions on how to assess circumstances determined to be "beyond the control" have been issued to facilitate verification reports for the period of implementation. The guidelines provide definitions and detailed examples of situations and circumstances that would indicate that the absence/non-functional status was beyond the control of the troop- and police-contributing country. Such conditions include natural disasters, hostile action and damage during transport or delays at customs.

76. Taking into consideration that the first quarter for which deductions to personnel reimbursement being applied is January-March 2014, it is not possible to report on the financial implications until after the contingent-owned equipment verification reports have been processed in May 2014. Further detailed information can be provided to the General Assembly during its consideration of this report.

77. Since May 2013, 16 countries have also formally requested amendments to their memorandums of understanding to remove equipment that is not in the mission area and/or adjust equipment to ensure that it is in line with current operational requirements. Accordingly, memorandums of understanding for 45 separate units have either been amended or are in the final process of assessment with military, police and/or logistics experts, to ensure that the requested revisions are in accordance with operational requirements.

VI. Action to be taken by the General Assembly

78. **The General Assembly is requested to:**

(a) **Take note of the report of the Secretary-General;**

(b) **Express appreciation to the sample countries for their participation in the survey;**

(c) **Review the rates of reimbursement to countries contributing uniformed personnel to United Nations peacekeeping;**

(d) **Establish a dedicated fund to finance the payment of premiums to contributing countries for enabling capabilities and for units that have acquitted themselves well in spite of exceptional levels of risk, at a level of $53.4 million or the equivalent percentages of any revised personnel reimbursement rate;**

(e) **Decide that the fund should be funded by applying a portion of the unencumbered balances and other income and adjustments of active peacekeeping operations for the financial period 2012/13;**

(f) **Decide that the fund shall be replenished through the unencumbered balances and other income and adjustments of the financial period where the premiums have been awarded.**

United Nations A/68/814–S/2014/219

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 35
The situation in the Middle East

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 25 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I should like to set out the position of the Syrian Arab Republic regarding the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) over the period from 4 December 2013 to 10 March 2014 (S/2014/199).

- The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic reiterates that it is committed to its obligations under the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement and has accordingly respected the mandate of UNDOF and facilitated its work in every way. The Government remains firmly committed to the safety and security of United Nations personnel and premises. For over four decades, for as long as Israel has occupied the Syrian Golan, the Government has cooperated and coordinated closely and fully with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNDOF command.

- Israel, on the other hand, has persisted in its repeated violations of the 1974 Agreement on Disengagement, the Charter of the United Nations and Security Council resolutions. It has repeatedly attacked locations inside Syrian territory under spurious and mendacious pretexts. It has provided direct and indirect support for the armed terrorist groups active in and around the area of separation. On 5, 18 and 19 March 2014, Israel attacked civilian and military targets within Syrian territory in an act of direct support for the armed terrorist groups. The United Nations and the Security Council were immediately informed of the attacks. One officer of the internal security forces was killed, and 14 others were injured, along with four civilians. The locations sustained extensive material damage. In addition, the report details numerous Israeli violations of the Agreement on Disengagement. For example, on 11 February 2014, 11 Israeli soldiers crossed the line of separation. On 5 March 2014, Israel fired 17 tank rounds towards the village of Hamadiyah in the area of separation, injuring 14 people and damaging a mosque and a school.

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- In addition to those acts of aggression, Israel has directly supported the terrorist groups. It has treated injured terrorists and returned them into Syrian territory, where they have continued to commit their crimes against the local inhabitants and peacekeepers. Those violations are detailed in the report of the Secretary-General. All the while, Israel has made a point of complaining to the Security Council whenever a shepherd crosses the line of separation. Yet at the same time, on 31 January 2014, during his visit to the occupied Syrian Golan on 31 January 2014, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Israeli entity made statements that reflected an insolent approach to the events in Syria, exposed Israel's expansionist intentions and displayed utter disdain for all United Nations resolutions on ending the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and all other Arab territories occupied by Israel since 1967, particularly Security Council resolution 497 (1981). He urged parliament to settle the issue of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights within the framework of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations and the events in Syria, and stated that that comprehensive deal must include an understanding among Israel, the international community and, first and foremost, the United States of America, that the Golan was an integral part of the State of Israel. Mr. Liberman claimed that, because of the security concerns relating to Israel's ability to defend the north of the country, the international community should recognize Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. Those insolent statements make it incumbent on the Security Council to emphasize that, politically, legally and morally, it is unacceptable that Israel should be allowed to persist in its contemptuous refusal to implement the relevant United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 497 (1981), which states that the Israeli decision of 14 December 1981 to impose its laws, jurisdiction and administration on the occupied Syrian Golan is null and void and without legal effect. The General Assembly has reaffirmed that position in its resolutions on the topic, the most recent of which is resolution 68/84.

- The report refers to numerous crimes and grave violations perpetrated by the armed terrorist groups with Israeli backing. UNDOF personnel saw the bodies of five individuals who had been beheaded. On 20 January 2014, the groups stopped an UNDOF convoy and looked for individuals of a specific nationality and religious affiliation. The terrorist groups used a tank in the vicinity of United Nations observation post 52, in addition to anti-tank missiles and improvised explosive devices. It is therefore no longer acceptable for the Secretariat to limit itself to calling on countries with influence to "strongly convey to the armed opposition groups in the UNDOF area of operation the need to halt all activities that endanger United Nations peacekeepers on the ground". Rather, the Security Council must take immediate measures in respect of the States that support, fund and give safe haven to the armed terrorist groups. To ignore the danger posed by the groups' presence and activities in the area of separation would exacerbate the instability of the area and jeopardize the safety and security of United Nations personnel.

- Syria stresses the need for United Nations personnel to respect their mandate. It is therefore surprised at paragraph 24 of the report, which states that United Nations personnel at position 80 were unable to provide "food, medicine and water" to an "armed opposition group". Under the mandate of UNDOF and the

relevant Security Council resolutions, it is a given that the Force does not meet with terrorist groups.

- The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic stresses that it is mindful of its obligations and has exercised the utmost restraint in confronting the activities of armed terrorist groups in the UNDOF area of operation. It understands the character of the area and the obligations that are in force. It reiterates that the actions of Syrian law enforcement forces are a response to an emergency situation arising from exceptional circumstances, namely the terrorist activities of terrorist groups in the area of separation. Syrian law enforcement forces have acted in response to appeals from the local population. The latter has borne the brunt of the terrorist activities which, as the report of the Secretary-General recognizes, have also targeted UNDOF and its personnel.

- Syria commends the efforts of UNDOF to fulfil its mandate. It again emphasizes the need to address the fundamental reason for the presence of UNDOF, namely the continuing Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan. It reiterates its call on the Security Council to enforce its resolutions in that regard, particularly resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 497 (1981), which reject the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan and require Israel to withdraw from all occupied Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan, to the line of 4 June 1967.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 35, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic
to the United Nations

United Nations A/68/815–S/2014/209

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Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 110
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Identical letters dated 22 March 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Further to our numerous letters regarding the efforts of the Al Saud regime to destroy the Syrian State and people, I should like to draw your attention to the letter dated 11 February 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Al Saud regime addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council. In that letter, which was issued as document A/68/769-S/2014/92, he claimed, inter alia, that his regime had promulgated new counter-terrorism legislation in an attempt to deceive the international community and convince it of the regime's sincerity in countering terrorism and fulfilling its commitments under the relevant Security Council resolutions. The regime seems to believe that contributing $100 million to finance the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Centre will absolve it of legal and moral responsibility for the thousands of deaths it has caused and offset the billions of dollars it has expended in support of terrorist groups in Syria and other parts of the world. In order to counter terrorism in fact, the regime's deeds should be aligned with its words, that is to say, it should promulgate legislation and put it into effect. The hollowness and lack of credibility of that legislation is demonstrated by the fact that the Saudi regime has not taken any real action to stop incitement to terrorism by reining in the Saudi preachers of strife who issued calls for jihad in Syria and other parts of the world in response to the call for jihad in the Levant that Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leader of Al-Qaida, made in October 2013.

The threat lies in the fact that this regime continues to disseminate the takfirist, Wahhabist ideology that has been adopted by all of the terrorist groups to justify their crimes. This evil has not only affected Syria, but also every group of Saudi society, where it struck first before spreading to the entire world. It is therefore not surprising that thousands of Saudis, including university professors, doctors, engineers, members of the military and civil servants, have embraced this takfirist, Wahhabist ideology because the Saudi regime is sponsoring and directing this terrorist ideology, which is linked to Al-Qaida both ideologically and

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organizationally. It is also ignoring the actions of those preachers of strife who are calling for jihad throughout the world. By exploiting the facilities given to them by the Saudi regime, such as access to television stations and social media, those preachers have managed to make individuals such as those named above to ignore their senses and abandon their families, lives and futures, and have convinced them to come to Syria, just as they came before to New York, London, Madrid and other cities of the region and the world, in order to kill and be killed for the sake of so-called jihad. This jihad is the product of political fatwas that are covered with a veneer of religion that is as far removed as can be from the tolerant principles and values of Islam. To confirm that the Saudis are supporting terrorism and sponsoring the criminals who commit acts of terrorism, my Government will provide the Security Council and its Committees concerned with counter-terrorism with detailed information regarding the identities of 228 Saudi terrorists who were killed in Syria.

It has become apparent to all that the Saudi regime's letters to the Security Council and its pledges to punish those who engage in combat in Syria on their return to their countries are simply an attempt to mislead. They are nothing more than cheap propaganda that must be replaced by tangible actions, the most significant of which should be the cessation of incitement of terrorism through the dissemination of Wahhabist, takfirist ideology, which is the foundation of extremism, and fatwas calling for jihad. The Saudi regime should also refrain from recruiting terrorists and dispatching them to Syria and other parts of the world, including Muslim countries. In that connection, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic affirms its right to bring to justice those who support the Arab and foreign terrorists who are committing crimes in Syria. This right shall not be extinguished should the terrorists be granted amnesty by their Governments on their return to their countries. This right is furthermore not subject to negotiation, may not be renounced and not time bound, as affirmed by Syrian domestic law, international law, United Nations resolutions and relevant international instruments.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic draws the attention of the Security Council to this important information and expects the Council to take the measures required to deter the Saudi regime from continuing to incite and support terrorism, in accordance with its resolutions 1267 (1999), 1373 (2001), 1624 (2005) and 1989 (2011).

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 110, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

United Nations A/68/816–S/2014/226

General Assembly
Security Council

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General Assembly
Sixty-eighth session
Agenda item 110
Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Security Council
Sixty-ninth year

Letter dated 26 March 2014 from the Chargé d' affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit the letter of Mr. M. Javad Zarif, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the shocking news about the possible murder of one of the five Iranian border guards abducted on 7 February 2014 (see annex).

I would highly appreciate if you could have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 110, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Gholamhossein **Dehghani**
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 26 March 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the unpleasant duty to draw your attention to the shocking news about the possible murder of one of the five Iranian border guards abducted on 7 February 2014 by an extremist terrorist group, in the border area between Iran and Pakistan. This is the latest in a series of similar terrorist atrocities against Iranian citizens, including diplomats and other officials and innocent civilians of Iranian and other nationalities, which include:

- Repeated explosions and terrorist attacks on our eastern border in recent months, which have resulted in the murder of at least 12 soldiers.
- Two car-bomb attacks on the Iranian diplomatic and cultural premises in Beirut on 19 November 2013 and 19 February 2014, killing one diplomat and a dozen security guards and many Lebanese civilian bystanders.
- The abduction and murder of Iranian diplomatic personnel in Sana'a, including the kidnapping of an Iranian diplomat, Mr. Nour Ahmad Nikbakht, on 21 July 2013, and the brutal assassination of another, Mr. Abolghassem Assadi, on 18 January 2014.
- A suicide attack on the Iranian Consulate-General in Peshawar, on 25 February 2014, killing two security guards and injuring many innocent Pakistani bystanders.

It is extremely regrettable that all available evidence indicates that these cowardly acts of terror targeting the Islamic Republic of Iran and its citizens have been perpetrated by State-sponsored extremist groups, with similar patterns of funding, coordination, support and direction. The entire international community should be alarmed by the regional and extraregional ramifications of sectarian tension and extremist violence, which are being systematically organized, sponsored and orchestrated in various parts of our region. In fact, learning from recent history, a sober assessment of the medium- and long-term implications of this dangerous trend will show that the very sponsors of such hatred, who for ill-conceived interests have hastily resorted to such short-sighted tactics to remedy their strategic miscalculations and failures, stand to lose the most from the sectarian and extremist violence that they are spreading.

Moreover, there is very little doubt concerning the inherent and reinforcing interrelationship in our region between a perpetual war economy, extremist violence and terrorism on the one side, and drug trafficking and transnational organized crime on the other. The Islamic Republic of Iran has been in the forefront of the global campaign against drug trafficking, with narcotic seizures by Iran amounting to over three quarters of the entire confiscations throughout the world. Being in the first line of defence against this global menace has cost Iran dearly in blood and treasure, without any meaningful international cooperation to share the cost, provide technological assistance, or at least take a resolute stance against those who have exacted a heavy toll on Iran, its innocent civilians and brave soldiers. While our sacrifices help to protect the entire humanity from the scourge of narcotics, the international community is simply not doing enough to help Iran in this never-ending struggle. Mere condemnation of acts of terrorism does not suffice.

In the past few days, all Iranians celebrated Nowruz — recognized by the General Assembly as an international day of peace, neighbourliness and solidarity — sharing the sense of grief and desperate anticipation of the families and loved ones of these national heroes. While we note the efforts of the Governments of Pakistan, Lebanon and Yemen, our hostages remain in captivity and the perpetrators of previous crimes have yet to face justice. The Iranian people have every right to demand more resolute global action, yielding practical results in bringing their hostages back home and in bringing to justice those responsible for the murder of their compatriots. A manifestation of this legitimate demand can be seen in the grass roots one-million signature campaign organized by Iranian youth, from all walks of life, calling upon you and other national and international authorities to take stronger measures to secure the early and safe return of their hostages. Through this letter, I join them in their dignified appeal to the global community.

I will be grateful if you have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly and the Security Council.

M. Javad **Zarif**
Minister for Foreign Affairs

United Nations A/68/817

General Assembly

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English
Original: Spanish

Sixty-eighth session
Agenda items 15, 33, 41 and 76 (a)

Culture of peace

Prevention of armed conflict

The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development

Oceans and the law of the sea

Letter dated 25 March 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of El Salvador, I have the honour to transmit herewith a note dated 24 March 2014 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of El Salvador, Mr. Jaime Miranda Flamenco, conveying my country's position on the recent developments and attempts at rapprochement made by the Government of Honduras concerning the situation of the Gulf of Fonseca (see annex).

As in the case of our previous communication addressed to you, dated 11 November 2013 (A/68/581), which precedes the present communication in terms of its content, I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 15, 33, 41 and 76 (a).

(*Signed*) Rubén Armando E. **Hasbún**
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative and Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 25 March 2014 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to write to you regarding the request made by the Government of the Republic of Honduras, through its Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Mary Flores, on 4 March 2014, concerning the appointment and subsequent sending of a high-level United Nations representative to ascertain in situ the situation in the Gulf of Fonseca, which has been historically and geographically shared by El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua.

In that regard, and in line with the position of the Government of El Salvador, as set out in the letter I sent you through our Permanent Representative to the United Nations on 11 November 2013 (A/68/581), I wish to reiterate that the situation in the Gulf of Fonseca is governed by the framework established by the Heads of State and Government of the coastal States of the Gulf in their declarations dated 4 October 2007, 30 March 2012, 4 December 2012 and 8 May 2013, copies of which are attached hereto.*

In view of the foregoing, the Gulf of Fonseca has been declared a zone of peace, sustainable development and security; in addition, the relevant institutional mechanisms have been established to ensure that such situations as may arise in that connection, irrespective of their nature, are considered and resolved by the trinational commission headed by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the three countries.

The Government of El Salvador therefore believes that it is not necessary to appoint or to send to the Gulf of Fonseca a high-level United Nations representative on a fact-finding mission or other related activity, as has been requested by the Government of Honduras, given that doing so would violate the spirit and the letter of the aforementioned presidential agreements.

Moreover, the Government of El Salvador regrets and condemns the provocative stance that the Government of Honduras has recently taken with regard to Conejo Island, on which it has opened a heliport and other infrastructure projects, in clear violation of El Salvador's sovereignty over the island. Through its actions, Honduras has irrefutably demonstrated an expansionist attitude as a direct result of its illegal military occupation of Conejo Island, which violates international law and the purposes and principles established in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular respect for State sovereignty and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

The Government of El Salvador therefore requests that you continue to promote dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes with regard to the situation in the Gulf of Fonseca, through the framework established by the Managua Declaration of 4 October 2007 and in direct consultation with the three coastal countries of the Gulf.

In addition, whenever issues related to the promotion of the Gulf of Fonseca as a zone of peace, sustainable development and security are taken up within the multilateral framework of the United Nations, they should only be addressed under agenda item 41 of the General Assembly, entitled "The situation in Central America: progress in fashioning a region of peace, freedom, democracy and development".

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* The texts referred to are on file with the Secretariat and are available for consultation.